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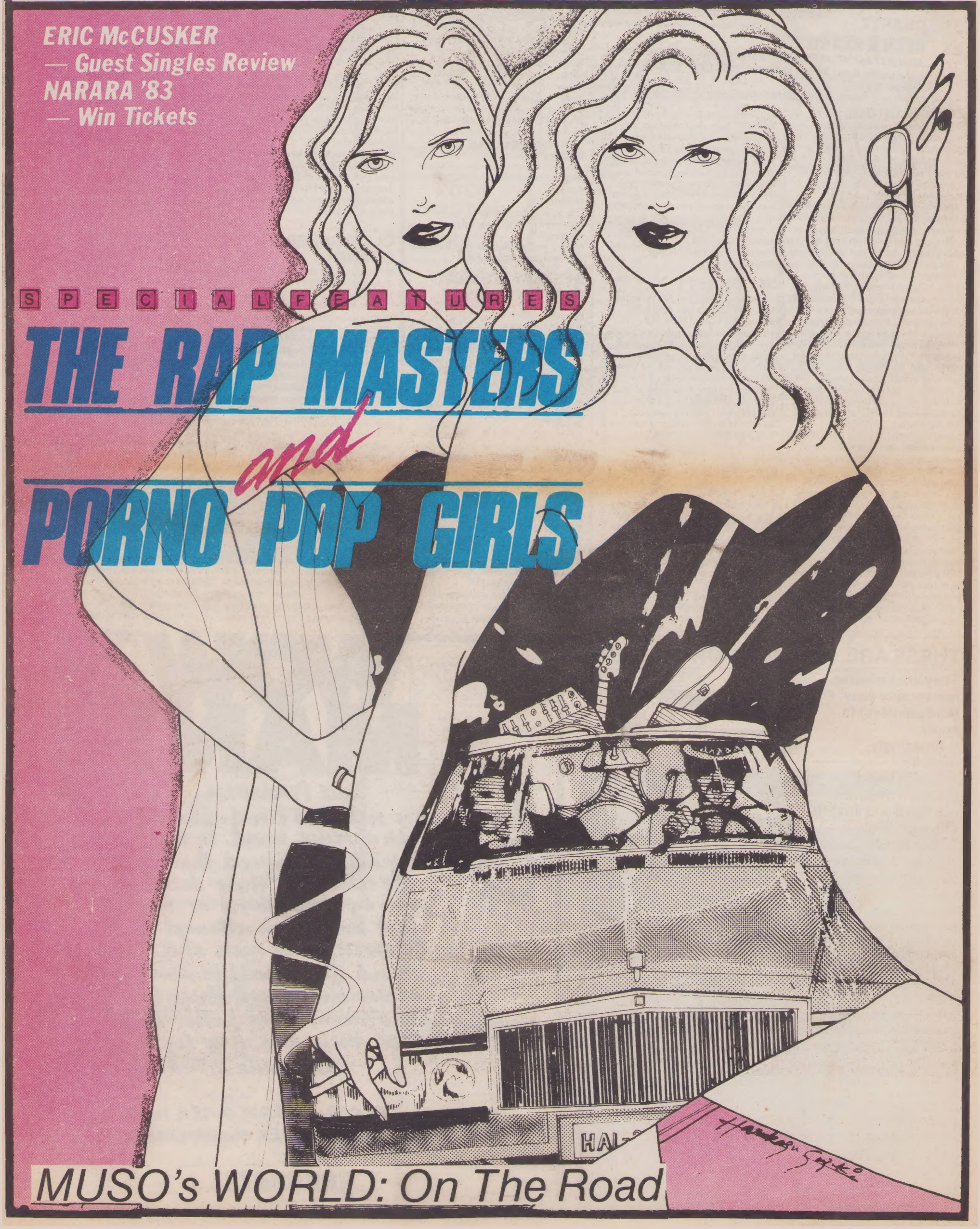
RAM

GRANDMASTER FLASH
VANITY 6 • TOM PETTY
HAYSI FANTAYZEE
DREAMS • MYSTERONS
WAIT • SPEEDBOAT

ERIC McCUSKER
— Guest Singles Review
NARARA '83
— Win Tickets



S P E C I A L F E A T U R E S

THE RAP MASTERS *and* PORNO POP GIRLS

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ZOMBIE DROOL

Hah! Another fine example. Dave Hill says of Lord Iggy's *Zombie Birdhouse* (#199): "I'd like another fortnight to consider. . . *but*. . ." Exactly. Reading through his review it was just like I'd written it myself. I agree wholeheartedly with his (re)view of the album. Or I did! A few listens later (which Iggy's always needed) I was crazy about the album and would rate it alongside (if not above) *Lust For Life* and *New Values*.

My point is, maybe after Mr Hill had heard the album a few more times, he might have agreed with me. But who's gonna know? Surely when reviewers say they would prefer more time to 'get into' the album, wouldn't it be wise to give them a few inches in "Seen & Heard" a few weeks later to present their views on, in this case "Birdhouse Revisited"? No? Well, it was just a thought.

Another thing that gave me the shits was that misinformed moron M. Arnold's views (#198) on the brilliant "Of The Record" on Triple J. It seems fashionable at the moment to give heaps to Australia's best radio station. And his criticism of poor Dano Mabootto (get it right!) is not only unfounded but also stupid. If you've ever seen Jono'n'Dano at work (which I have — so there!) you'll know that it's the Fake Fijian who does all the work, not the Wide guy. Adam'n'Angela disappear, Mr Producer chain smokes, the fat guy wracks his brain for something funny to say between records and Dano works his grass skirt off! He does everything and gets little or no credit. So get it right next time.

I'll end this letter by begging for an Iggy story and an article on "Off the Record", (what a great idea), and by rubbishing your Birthday Party article, I just happened to buy that issue at the same time as the latest import *Melody Maker* which also had a (magnificent) story on Nicholas and the boys. Next to theirs, yours was about as witty and enlightening as a romp through the yellow pages. (Christ, even *N.M.E.'s* article was better — only just.)

The Idiot New Race Stooge,
Blacktown.

SET ON JETT

I'm writing to tell you just how great the Joan Jett gig was, and to all those male egos, I hope she gave you something to remember — girls can rock too! And to tell you the truth, even if she doesn't get much airplay, she's still proved she's one of the best rockers around.

I send my love and kisses to that bouncer who kept telling me to get out because I had my studded wristband on and wouldn't take it off. Anyway, who was it that said women couldn't rock?? Rip that guitar maaan. . .

Joan Jett & Friends

THEN AND NOW

I have been recently reading with great interest many old RAMs, circa 77-80. And though I appreciate the current writers and particularly the layout of the present RAM, I still yearn for A.O'G. (Lord God), Miranda and Jenny Hunter-Brown (loyal disciples). Where have they all gone? Will A.O'G. linger in newspapers forever? Will baby Hunter-Brown let mummy near a typewriter again?

In defence of the present scribes, Stuart Coupe is a great writer, and 'Aspiring Coupe Basher' (#198) should get his/her subjective nose off Coupe's case. Elly McDonald's piece on rape was really interesting (like, heavy y'know?), and for a change, the singles survived relatively unscathed and even managed to score some more than favourable comments (though tht is one weird grandmother!)

A 'Flies' Fan,
Chester Hill, NSW

MUM: DON'T LET ME OUT OF HELL!

A short note of thanks to Jimmy'& the Boys for a week of exciting gigs they did in Sydney a few weeks ago. The recent release of "In Hell with Your Mother-The Live LP" spurred me to write this letter as it reminded me of the fun, raging seven days.

I'm glad that the live album wasn't watered down (e.g. "Fuck Face Fraser" etc. etc.) From comments about Joylene's growler vagina attachment, to "Fred Nile Sit on My Face", it all makes for fond memories and a good piece of vinyl from one of the best loved live bands in the country.

Hopefully sometime in 1983 the band will consider doing some more shows. . . maybe even one or two in Melbourne.

Peter,
Melbourne.

P.S. — Will the new song "In Hell with your Mother" ever be released??

Sssh. . .you know what they'll do with the least encouragement.

DEEPEST SORROW. . .

Could I be the first to say:

"Bing Bong Tiddlydum Dimmy Dimmy" in RAM?

Yours sincerely,
Mould,
Mt. Barker, WA.

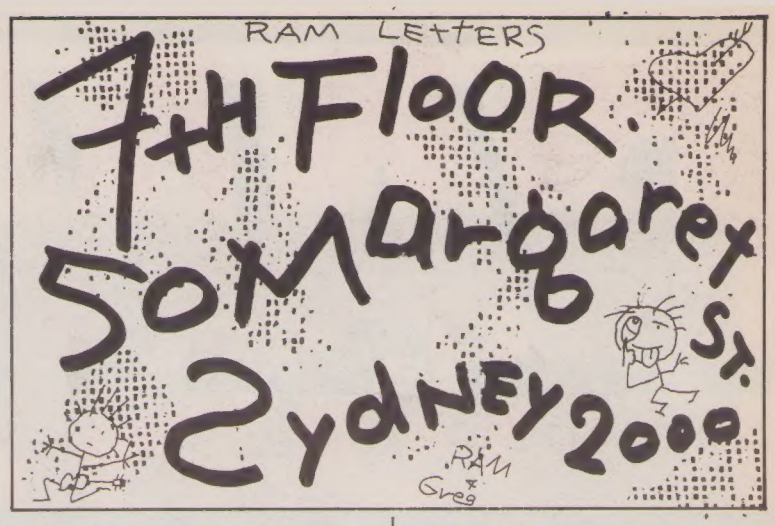
No — we've been saying it for years — and stop pretending this is *NME's* Gasbag page.

A STAT. IS A STAT. IS A STAT. . .

Keri Phillips' article on Oz Rock (#201) was a fair slice of information on OZ Bands except for the fact that it was mostly plagiarism.

Being a member of the privileged minority that receives *Billboard* magazine, I have evidence that Ms. Phillips has copied most of her information straight out of the pages of this hallowed institution. Her statistics on the Easybeats, Icehouse, Split Enz, AC/DC and the Sports were so terribly out of context that it was sickening.

The article which she stole her information from was in *Billboard's* 25th September edition. It was



designed to show how well Australian bands have gone throughout the years. The Easybeats' effort in reaching #16 in 1967 was a bloody good performance, but Ms. Phillips had the gall to say that it *only* reached #16.

Ms. Phillips obviously thinks that she can get away with anything, being all alone in a foreign country, but *Big Brother Is Watching You.*

G.M. Easton,
Beverly Hills, NSW.

Just try to look at it like this, O Impetuous One: if you are going to give statistics on chart placings in America, where else would you obtain them apart from the leading trade magazine?

OLD CLINGERS CORNER

What's a gig these days? I thought they just faded away or is it just the bands?

Ooh! Well, in one case, I feel strongly it would have to be the band. Of course I'm talking about the one and only Midnight Oil, commonly known as the Oils!

If it wasn't for the new press I thought they really died months ago. But the good old band, which is idolised by people from the age they can stand up to old diggers just getting on down to the latest jive on the new 2UW. . . I think Peter Garrett and the rest just left their (swelled) heads in San Francisco.

I mean the day you pay $15 for a Midnight Oil shirt, I think there's something terribly wrong there. Midnight oil can go commercial or tour the USA in neon lights, they're a band and they've worked hard for years to earn their present day position.

All that I ask is for them to play a little more in Sydney, Australia, just like they're doing everything else a little more.

Who knows, maybe one day they will write a song called 'There's No Place like Home'.

I hope they don't — I'll die laughing.

Bert (just a fan),

Seen any other Oz bands do five nights in a row at the Capitol recently, Bert?

IT'S AN ALL WIND. . .

Who is this maniac Phil Stafford who roams the pges of RAM? Stafford's review on The Sherbs' latest album in issue 201 was utter pig shit. I spit on you Stafford.

The Sherbs are an institution in the Oz rock scene and who better to recognise an institution than me, god knows how many institutions I've been in.

Stafford in his review says that lyrics like *'a roaring silence broke into the room'* are excessive, well to you I say better a roaring silence than a roaring fart. . . any day Philip, any day. . .

Sherbs fan forever and ever
. . .I'm just. . .blown away (PS).

IS THERE A P.R. PERSON IN THE HOUSE?

How many Skyhooks does it take to change a light-globe? How many beans made five. What does Lola Slut, Peter Green and Sleezy Sue have in common? Does *Hooked On Hooks* really have a secret list of Skyhook Tour dates on it when played on a faster speed? Does Greg Macainsh use "Wella Silver Look"? Are his Apple-Pies really tasty? Will *Hooked On Hooks* make number one nationally?

It will if all you scumbags buy 20 copies each. A number one hit is a certified Hooks tour. . . if it doesn't we will track everyone down who didn't buy a copy and sit on your faces.

A misguided Soul,
(with a strong right Hook)

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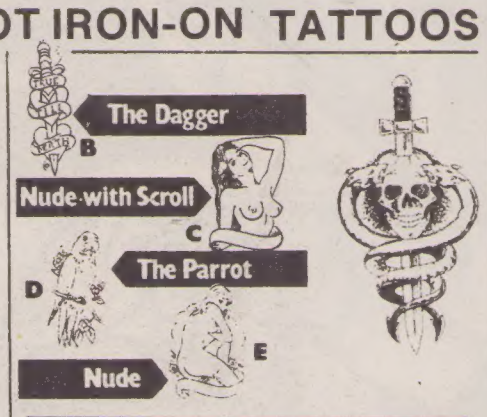

A SAS Dagger
B Dagger on Sjull
C Dragon on Anchor
D Mermaid
E Red Indian
F Bulldog and Union Jack
G Rose with Scroll
H Swallow with Scroll
I Nude with Scroll and Flowers
J Nude
K Parrot
L Eagle

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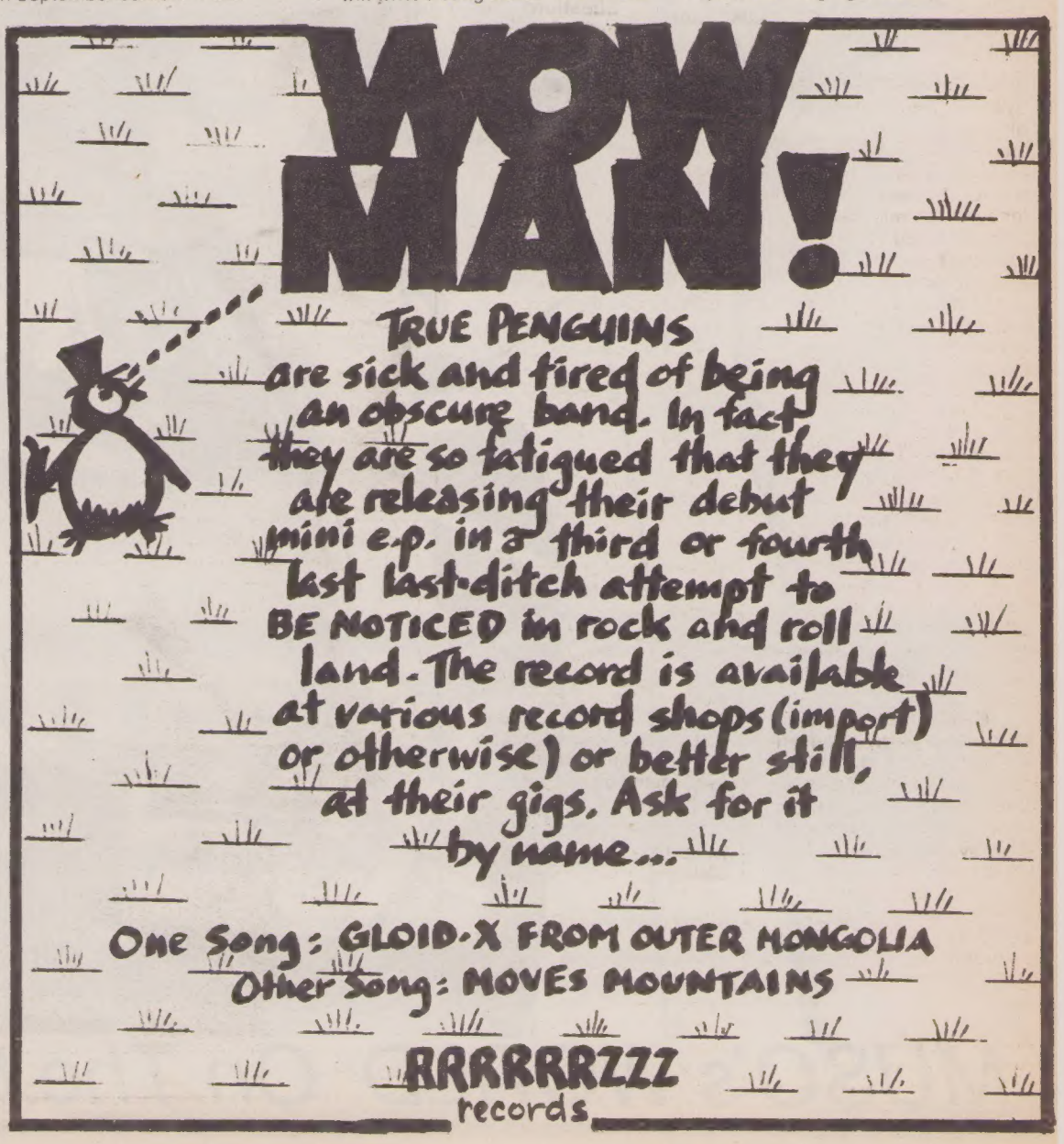

WOW MAN!
TRUE PENGUINS
are sick and tired of being an obscure band. In fact they are so fatigued that they are releasing their debut mini e.p. in a third or fourth last last-ditch attempt to BE NOTICED in rock and roll land. The record is available at various record shops (import) or otherwise) or better still, at their gigs. Ask for it by name...
One Song: GLOID-X FROM OUTER MONGOLIA
Other Song: MOVES MOUNTAINS
RRRRRRZZZ
records

Transit Lounge

PEOPLE, EVENTS, THINGS ON THE MOVE

Peter Tosh

Pentangle

PETER TOSH, JOHN MARTYN, PENTANGLE To Tour

One of reggae's most famous figures, PETER TOSH, will visit Oz in March. Tosh, an early colleague of Bob Marley in the Wailers, wrote reggae standards like *Legalise It, Get Up Stand Up* and *Keep Walking — Don't Look Back,* and has had a modicum of success as a solo artist. Association with various rock stars. (eg. the Rolling Stones — who could forget Mick Jagger being totally dwarfed by him in their odd duo version of *Don't Look Back*?) helped expose him more to a white rock audience than most reggae artists.

And JOHN MARTYN (*see feature last issue*) returns to Australia in January, this time with his own band. His visit will virtually coincide with one from folk-rockers PENTANGLE, "specially reformed" with all original members Bert Jansch, John Renbourn, Jacqui McShee, Danny Thompson and Terry Cox.

Boy George Worries Yanks

Shock! Horror! Unprecedented scandal! In the land of the split electorate (Democrat? Republican? Unconscious?), fence-sitters find the going uncomfortable. . . in more ways than one. What's behind all of this? Boy George (and Culture Club) of course, raising the ire (not to mention the hackles) of rednecks across 52 borderlines of awareness.

In the same week that Culture Club made their debut at the New York *Ritz*, the American scandal sheet *Weekly World News* doubled over with outrage on behalf of WASP parents everywhere.

"This kind of sexual mix-up could create an entire generation of homosexuals," screamed one outraged parent in a letter to the editor.

Meanwhile, *WWN* posed the definitive questions: "Is it a her? A him? Or is it neither?", while displaying its peculiar sense of investigative insight.

Sydney's **Ward 13** have gone off the road only a month after releasing their new mini album, *Too Much Talk*. The record had been in the works for ages, the release was carefully timed for the Christmas market. . . and then the radio ban came down. Ward 13 just happen to be on **Polygram**, one of the two co..panies 'made examples of', and *Too Much Talk* got zilch exposure.

"It makes you wonder about the 'thirteen'," said lead singer **John Arthur** ruefully. "We've certainly been a bit unlucky." The band were already finding live work economically frustrating, and the cruelling of the record's chances was the final blow.

Though further recording is still a possibility according to Arthur, the band is unlikely to co..e back with the same

The Everchanging Lineup. . . keyboardist **Andrew Duffield** has rejoined the **Models**, and bass player **James Freud** is "fully recovered" from the grievous injuries sustained recently playing footie. The band will be touring the eastern states through January then go into the studio for their fourth album. More scratchings and late starts as they come to hand. . .

And **Split Enz** have just compited sessions for their new single. **Neil Finn** recently put in some extra studio time producing a single for **Karen Ansell,** former keyboardist with the Reels.

'Let not to the meeting of true minds admit impediment. . .' One of our favourite Edge City entertainers, Ms. **Mopsie Beans,** has teamed up with the highly appropriate Mr. **William O'Riordan** (Ms. **Joylene Hairmouth** in another incarnation) for a season at Sydney's Blue Cockatoo theatre restaurant. Dates are January 7, 14, 15, 21, 22, 28 and 29.

The new Downstairs production at Sydney's **Nimrod Theatre** deals with a familiar line in pop psychosis. *Are You Lonesome Tonight?* is about "a mum and her three children who live in a fantasy world dominated by the Presley cult. They imitate his habits, fill the house with artifacts, re-enact scenes from his life. . ."

White Irish bluesman **Rory Gallagher** and his band have run into trouble Stateside lately — from the Ku Klux Klan. . . Seemed the band ran across a riot during a visit to Washington D.C., and barely escaped having their car overturned by the hooded ones. . .

Once booked into their hotel, they were awakened at three in the morning by a fire, which had spread to their floor — but was later halted by the local fire department, saving the band's collective skin.

Could it be mere coincidence that the band's latest album is entitled *Jinx*?

Jam 100? Hairjam? With the **Jam** split official and a Haircut 100 breakup in the wind, **Paul Weller** was seen lunching with **Nick Heyward** — there's no truth in the rumour that they'll join forces, but apparently the toothy one invited the bandless one back to his studio to listen to a few songs. Said Weller: "Got anything for my solo project?"

Martin *(Taxi Driver, Raging Bull)* **Scorsese** intends to use the **Pretenders'** current single *Back On The Chain Gang* as part of the soundtrack for his upcoming film, *King Of Comedy* — maybe for a spot of dramatic relief?

English percussion band **King Trigger,** who had a mild flurry on the independent charts with their single *The River*, are likely to disband on the eve of their first album release. Original drummer Trudi Baptiste left soon after the completion of recording, and lead singer Sam Hodgkin has now departed to pursue a career in films, putting the actual release of the band's debut album in doubt. . .

A chart rigging scandal has erupted in England following accusations of contract breaking and negligence on the part of the **British Market Research Bureau.** The people who put up the money for the *Top Of The Pops* and BBC Radio 1 charts (among others) have asked police to investigate irregularities in the Bureau's methods of compilation.

From the beginning of January, the job has been placed in the hands of the Gallup research company, who have devised a scheme whereby 250 stores return instant information via computerised cash registers. The BMRB method involved 750 stores recording sales in diaries which were collected regularly by the Bureau and then fed into a computer to obtain the results.

Certain irregularities culminated in the suspension of a Bureau employee for alleged falsification of chart return diaries.

The new system is bound to see people like record companies, the BBC and trade magazine *Music And Video Week*, who have major vested interests in the accuracy of the charts, breathe a little easier.

Funny thing is that if the charts have been hyped, which has yet to be proved, a record company or companies would have to be involved in the intrigue. Heads may well roll. . .

H.M. — Heavy Misogyny? We thought we'd clear up the controversy by citing the case of English heavy metal combo, **Witchfinder General.** Seems the boys have run into a spot of trouble over the sleeve of their latest record, *Death Penalty*, which tastefully depicts a semi-naked woman under attack by various members of the band dressed in English civil war costumes — the scene? — a graveyard.

Turn to the back, and the same (unfortunate) woman, now dead, lies in a pool of blood upon a gravestone — murder weapon (a knife) in close proximity.

The English Advertising Standards Authority told the distributors of the record that complaints had been received about the cover following its reproduction in a trade newspaper.

Heavy Metal Records (the distributors) were aghast: "The ad (and thus the cover) is in the best possible taste — it's merely a re-enactment of a factual event which took place during the 18th century when the Witchfinder General, Matthew Hopkins, led a reign of terror against women of the day."

King Trigger (Pic: US/SL)

Mopsie Beans

tours

Simon & Garfunkel
February
5 Sydney Sports Ground
9 Adelaide Oval
12 VFL Park, Waverley, Melbourne
15 Lang Park, Brisbane

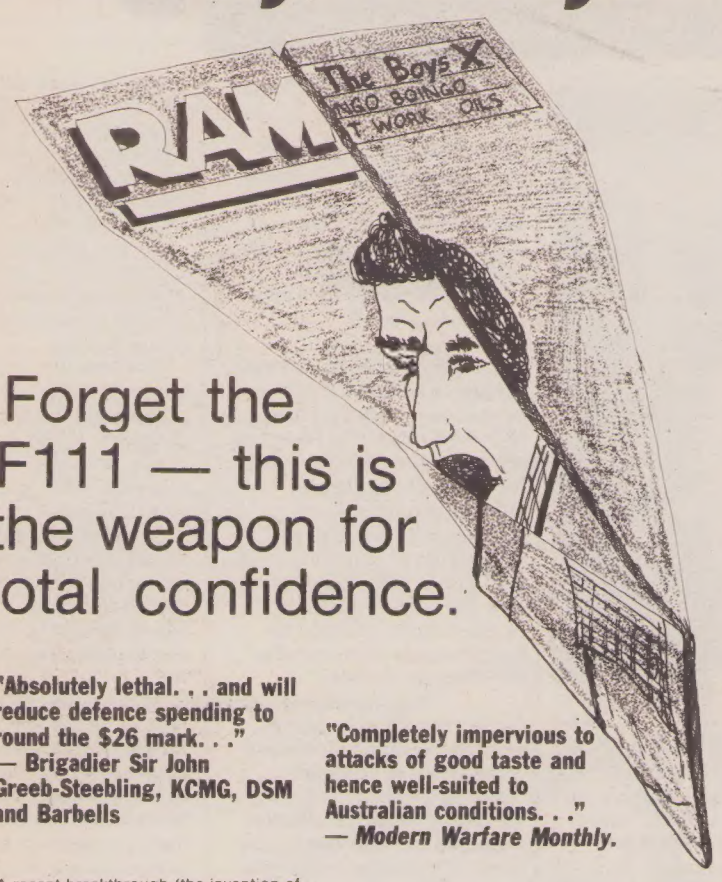
John Martyn
January
22 Opera Theatre, Adelaide
24 Dallas Brookes, Melbourne
26 Capitol, Sydney

Pentangle
January
27 Sydney Town Hall
28 Canberra Theatre
29 Dallas Brookes, Melbourne
February
1 Tasmanian Folk Festival
3 Opera Theatre, Adelaide
5 Concert Hall, Perth

Peter Tosh
March
10 Hordern, Sydney
14 Myer Music Bowl, Melb.
17 Thebarton, Adelaide
21 Entertainment Centre, Perth
24 Festival Hall, Brisbane
27 Bruce Sports Centre, Canberra
28 Civic Theatre, Newcastle

George Thorogood & The Destroyers
January
20 16 ft Sailing Club, Newcastle
T.B.A. Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne & Adelaide.

RAM — The Only Way To Fly!



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'Australia needs Los Trios Ringbarkus' The Age

LOS TRIOS RINGBARKUS

and

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Black Sabbath
The Exploited
Sex Pistols
Pink Floyd

Judas Priest
Echo and the Bunnyman
James Dean
Shakin Stevens
Gillan
Rainbow
Peter Tosh
Frank Zappa
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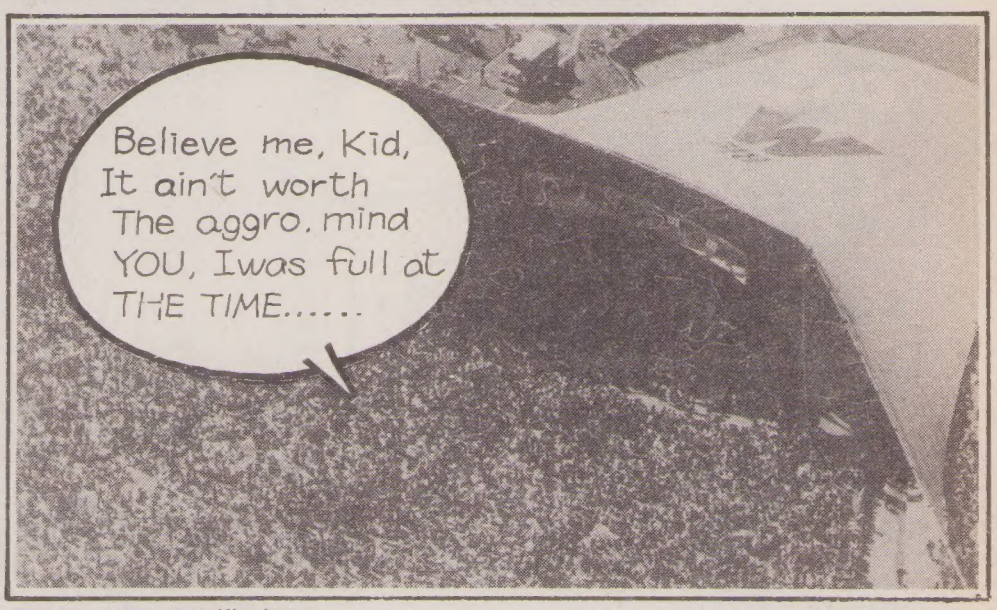
PEOPLE, EVENTS, THINGS ON THE MOVE

The Narara Site (Pic: Bob King)



The 'Bowl' (Pic: Bob King)

NARARA '83 — LOOKING SOLID

Ever since the last Sunbury concerts, big Australian outdoor music fests have been dogged by a bitter residue of consumer complaints and contributors' lawsuits. Though a large part of this disenchantment was due to many people taking many years to realise that *Woodstock* only lasted three days, the fact remains that rock celebrations in Oz during the last decade have rarely sailed smoothly through the rocks of Proper Amenities, Proper Payment, Acceptable Handling Of Messy Drunks, and Acceptable Mix of Interesting Culture and Wham-Bam-Thank-You-Mam Entertainment.

Then last year, along came Tanelorn. . .We wanted to believe, you wanted to believe, and golly, those guys certainly had the track record in New Zealand.

Like, Sweetwaters must be one of the few annual and successful rock fests in the world, and it's still going strong. And to be sure Tanelorn fulfilled many peoples' hopes, and its achievement probably outweighs the various on-site inconveniences and the various unpaid creditors (including this magazine).

Enough, already. This is 1983, and at long last the Australian music industry has got off its bum and decided to promote a long weekend event: three days and three nights of the best Oz talent that wants to come along.

The syndicate behind Narara includes a lot of the Oz music industry heavies: *not* people who could disappear after the event and still be in business. In the forefront is promoter and manager **Michael Chugg,** and **Michael Coppel** of Australian Concert Entertainment; mainman at the Narara office is **Lee Dillow,** a veteran organiser of at least six major outdoor fests and former editor of the *Daily Planet*. Planning started six months back; 14 staff are currently manning the office and supervising the site construction. During the event there will be 200 security guys, and 100 front-of-house workers; along with all the caterers, medical staff and other ancillary types, there'll be nearly 700 toilers.

"The budget is between eight hundred thousand and a million dollars," says Chugg bemusedly in the midst of a point-by-point outline of Narara's workings. . .

ACCESS

Right beside Old Sydney Town at Gosford is the best way to describe it: next issue we'll have maps, along with specific instructions on how to avoid traffic jams. But bear these points in mind as you decide how to get to Narara:

•Mucho special train and connecting bus services have been laid on. Details from the Narara Office, and (God & The Railways willing) in next issue's special Narara supplement.

•There will be bulk parking. You pay before you park — i.e. there will be a gate, and if you've come all this way, why expect to park on the outskirts 'to see what's happening'. Your vehicle will be in a 24-hour security area: like all official Narara areas, it will be well-lit, accessible to participants, and patrolled by security guards. And there will be a special section for motorbikes.

•No Passouts: you can come for whatever portion of the event you like, but there will be no passouts. One of the organisers' major concerns is to avoid the two-way traffic snarl-ups that have dogged many festivals; besides which, multiple comings-and-goings are regarded as a terrible security headache. "There will be stores on-site with everything you might reasonably need for a weekend of catered camping," says Dillow. "We hope that people will appreciate this regulation — like the others — as something to make things smoother for all of us."

AMENITIES

•FOOD: "We're not presuming to tell people what to eat: if they want a pie and peas they should be able to get it." So declaims Lee Dillow, but in fact the commestible catering seems to be highly varied and highly organised. Between 40 and 50 stalls have applied for sites: all have to pass stringent health inspections from the Shire Council, and the Narara organisation is doing before-and-after monitoring of service and prices. "About six bucks — say for a Chinese meal, or something fairly elaborate — would be round about the maximum," say the organisers. "And obviously leading down from there. There will be all sorts of stalls, including many vegetarian numbers. . ."

•DRINK: As they warily tread the extent of the license provided by the proprietors of Old Sydney Town (the tourist location which adjoins the Narara site), the organisers are necessarily vague in detailing the booze-flogging situation. Australian beer and wine will be available (at public bar prices), but only in opened, 'drink now' servings.

And remember: Narara, like most sensible extended outdoor events, is NO GLASS, NO CANS. Cars and bags will be searched for these. No-one should beef about that — if they take 30 seconds to think about somebody's foot (maybe your own) impaled on a jagged bottle end. If you want jungle juice, how much trouble is it to fill some plastic bottles? And water and soft drinks will be readily available. . .

CAMPING

The organisers of Narara are basing their costs on an attendance of 25,000 paying people. A lot of their credit will depend on the satisfaction of the many expected campers.

•Limited caravan-style camping will be available. A network of power and water points has been set up throughout the camping ground. Spaces can be reserved through the organisers, but the intention is to maximise the access.

•300 "solid" toilets will be erected, predominating around the camping area, along with the 'usual' (no jacuzzis) washing facilities.

•A nearby dam will offer total immersion or a cool-off paddle: potential drowners will be frustrated by a full-time official lifeguard team.

•No dogs or other pets, for a multitude of health'n'comfort reasons.

HEALTH

The organisers promise a round-the-clock medical area, staffed by registered doctors and nurses. Check next issue for map and facility detailing.

CHILD CARE

There will be a supervised child care area (right by the medical section). Obviously, if you didn't feel like spending a fair bit of time with the children you came with, why did you bring them along. . .?

This area will also act as an agency for 'Lost Kids'. Let's hope no-one is an orphan for more than a few minutes.

ENTERTAINMENT

'Happy to be Australian' seems to be the key: Narara is banking on a big range of home-grown talent rather than O.S. stars. There will be two stages, the smaller of which will present a selection of 'progressive' bands, plus comedy and revue-style acts.

Next issue we'll have the full list of performers (which will appear in a special liftout programme guide to Narara): bands "totally confirmed" so far include:

Cold Chisel
Australian Crawl
The Angels
Moving Pictures
The Church
Richard Clapton
Jo Jo Zep
Billy Field
Goanna Band
Bushwackers
Goldrush
Radiators
Redgum
Allniters
Dynamic Hepnotics
Mark Gillespie
The Dreams
Choirboys
Mighty Guys
Zarsoff Brothers

THE VITAL NUMBERS

DATE: From midday Friday, January 28, till Monday night.
PLACE: Next to Old Sydney Town, 70 kilometres north of Sydney. (Detailed access routes next issue).
COST: $35 plus booking fee, proportional reductions at the gates if you come for one or two days. Children (7-12) half price, under 7, free. Bookings at Mitchell Bass in Victoria, Festival Hall in Brisbane, and Mitchell Bass plus numerous country outlets in NSW. Narara info hot-line — (02) 358 6002.

REASONS TO BE CHEERFUL

At a certain point in conversation, most festival organisers will stare at you and say with intense conviction: "This one is going to better-organised/more comfortable/more interesting. . ." The last depends on what interests you, but Dillow and Chugg have a good line in practical ways to a well-run weekend of music. As Lee says cheerfully: "Between all the people involved we've made most of the mistakes before — we even invented some of them!"

And if YOU want to check the Narara Method on the super-cheap, here's the competition for you. . .

Famous Music Bowl 'Drunk And Disorderly'

Sidney Myer, the well-known Melbourne park and auditorium-about-town, fell victim to the combination of rock'n'roll and strong liquor on Friday, December 17, with distressing results. "Giving offence to young ladies", "turfing cans around", and "giving rock and roll a bad name" were among the comments of disgusted onlookers.

'The Bowl' (as he is known in sporting circles) was at the centre of a large crowd, numbered in the mega thousands, who gathered to hear a free concert by leading Melbourne bands. Party hosts were the well-known radio station 3EON (Ms.) and the recently married Wheatley Organisation: the occasion was called the 'Thank God It's Over' concert, and that's how the authorities would like to see it between The Bowl and rock-and-roll from now on.

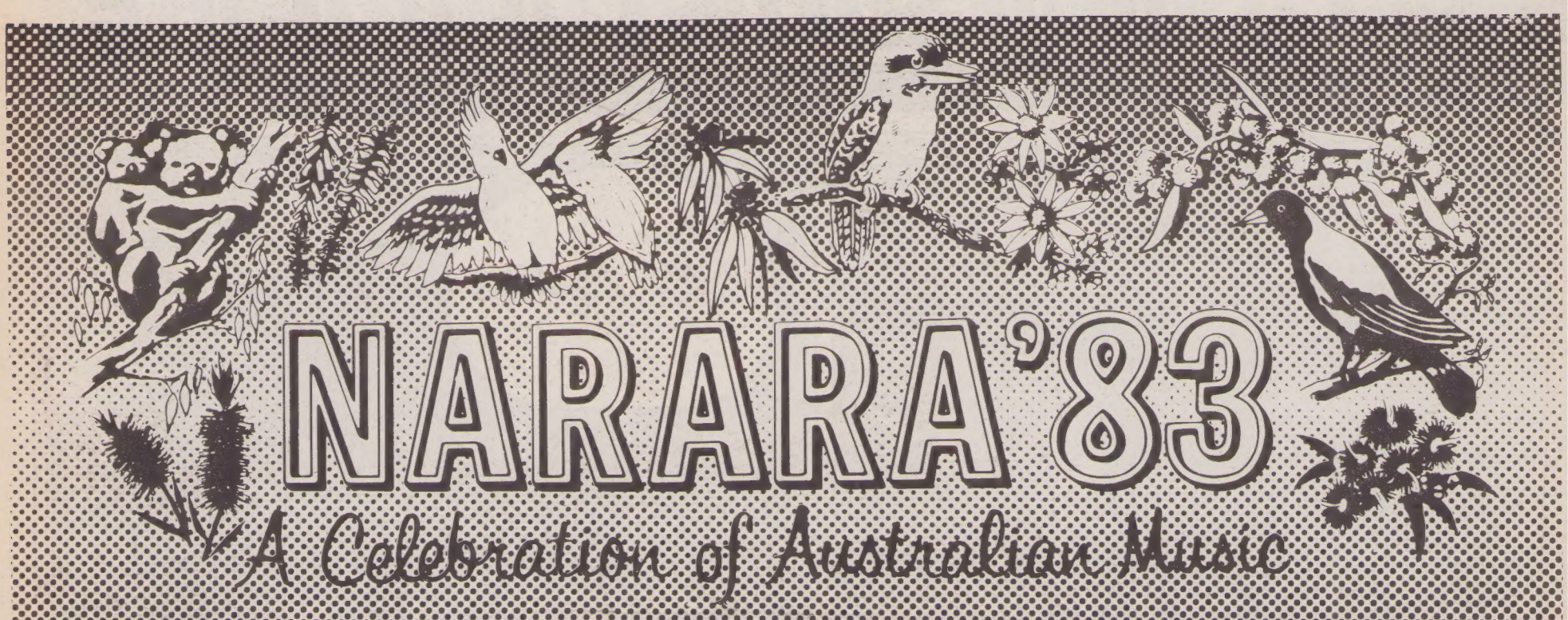
For the next three months, both are on probation. The Minister for Police, Mr. Matthews, has stipulated that 'The Bowl' will have to wear temporary fencing for rock concerts during this period, and there will be a total ban on alcohol within this protective garment.

5 NARARA TICKETS TO BE WON!

A fast and optimistic contest for fast and optimistic people:

In 50 words or less tell us about the most wonderful or ludicrous thing that could happen to you at an open-air weekend celebration.

The 5 most entertaining entries will win passes to Narara '83.
Mark your brainstorms "Narara Comp", and send without delay to RAM (7th Floor, 50 Margaret St. Sydney 2000). Contest closes on Tuesday, January 18.



NARARA '83

A Celebration of Australian Music

AUSTRALIA DAY WEEKEND

JANUARY 28, 29, 30, 31.

NEXT DOOR TO OLD SYDNEY TOWN

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CHOIRBOYS THE CHURCH RICHARD CLAPTON
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GOLDRUSH JO JO ZEP THE RADIATORS REDGUM
RODNEY MALCOLM RUDE ZARSOFF BROS

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TAMWORTH: Palings LISMORE: Palings MUSWELLBROOK: Uptempo Music Centre GRAFTON: Buckley's Music Centre
GOULBURN: Greig's Music BATHURST: Max Ingersole ARMIDALE: Treble Cleff Music Store TAREE: Berrigan's Music
NOWRA: Hewlett's Record Bar PORT MACQUARIE: The Music Factory COFFS HARBOUR: Palings KEMPSEY: World Music

NARARA '83 INFORMATION HOTLINE 02·358 6002

THE DREAMS

Don't Call ME Cabaret!

"I just *know* you got a chick on the side!" (Pic: Rhonda Thwaite)

The Dreams — Tony, Rick, Martin, Kim, Peter, Suzette, Camille. (Pic: Rhonda Thwaite)

THE CONTRAST is startling. Four guys in severe black have played a muted overture, heads down over instruments, barely moving in the dim light. Then an offstage MC booms through the loudspeakers: "LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: PLEASE WELCOME. . . *THE DREAMS!*"

The music snaps into funky focus and three outrageously coloured apparitions flamingo-strut from the wings, stilettos and wide-mesh stockings underpinning wild creations of padding and rufflement; the spotlights surge up and the whole seven-piece ensemble eyeballs the audience and bursts into the Pointer Sisters' *(I Know You Got) A Chick On The Side.*

Forty minutes later The Dreams have run from funk to puppy-love doo-wop (*Mr. Postman*) to a cover of the Reels' *Prefab Heart* to swing, wrapped it all up with a scat version of Weather Report's *Birdland,* and left the audience at Kinsela's with that 'Yes, I've definitely seen a show tonight!' feeling.

This is the general intention; the Dreams' common interest is in the visual and dramatic possibilities rather than "straight music", and their backgrounds, though widely differing, reflect this. Kim Deacon is a well-known actress (*Getting Of Wisdom, Hoodwink, Cop Shop, Young Doctors* etc.), Suzette Waters is a costume designer — the Dreams' look comes from her — whose performing career runs from strip shows to Darlinghurst cult extravaganzas like Simon & The Diamonds; and Camille Gardner has been working in film and musicals in both Australia and New York for some years — she worked on the movie *Smithereens (see issue 197),* and recently she was the lead understudy for *Evita* in the Oz production.

All four musicians have stage show experience, ranging from the minimal in drummer Rick Hawkins, who comfortably confesses to a career that "only really began a year or so ago", to the almost too extensive credits of keyboardist Martin Raphael ("If I start talking about some of those bands, you'll have an inkling of my true age. . .") In between lie guitarist Tony Dwyer, up in Sydney after several years in Adelaide theatre restaurants, and the irrepressible Peter Marshall who gave up the life of a Canberra piano teacher to be a bass player: "I had freckles and short red hair, so my reason for going into rock was so that I could get lots of girls."

His colleagues greet this with mocking laughter. . .

"And how'd ya go, Peter?" purrs Kim.

"Well, there's all these little red-haired people all over Australia. . ." Besides this exciting work, he's played in bands ranging from Jim Keays' to Marc Hunter's, and stage shows like *Dimboola.*

Peter is also the one who does his block when we start taking photos of the three girls. "This isn't a backing muso thing," he storms. "I've had all that with Marc Hunter. . ."

Okay, alright already, let's *integrate* the shot and let it be known that the Dreams *are* a seven-piece, all-for-one-one-for-all, indivisible entity. . . but it wasn't always so, and the contrast of the costumes merely reflects the way this group came together.

The players were until extremely recently known as 'Killer': Martin pulled in Rick and Peter to perform his musical drama *Nolan* at the Adelaide and Sydney Festivals last year, and with the addition of Tony, the band kept working sporadically through '82.

The all-singing, all-dancing trio became 'The Dreams' in someone else's imagination entirely. Just over a year ago, one Rrats Bander dusted off his shock-rock career and mounted a new show, (taking him as one bemused observer would have it, "out of the snakes-in-aspic to something in a Lounge Lizard, size 4"). Several months of gigs and photospreads later, Rrats packed it in and prepared to depart to England. However, the Dreams — Camille, Suzette and Kim — by now felt they had a life of their own, and kept in touch with each other throughout the year. When the offer of a season at the newly opened Kinsela's came up, and a show had to be put together, Killer was the working unit with obvious compatibility.

That show was a brittle, fast-moving, camped-up potpourri of girl group material. But Kim disclaims any particular theme — "We're interested in all kinds of music, and these numbers just happened to be ones we all liked", and while all agree that the tone is tongue-in-cheek, it appears this may not always be so. (A longer, more ambitious spectacular is currently being devised for a return season at Kinsela's early in January.)

Nor do the Dreams feel their chances of success have anything to do with the interest in sophisticated pop visual presentation sparked off late last year by the Globos. Be *that* as it may, the fact that the Dreams are a tasty and talented *band* is sufficient to put them in a different league. (The music is thoroughly tight — intricate segues or whip-sharp endings a specialty!)

Without wanting to upset the *democratisation* of the Dreams, the past of one member is one of the strongest pointers for an intriguing future. Martin Raphael was playing in schoolboy bands back in Liverpool in the early '60s — at tech. college he took over a rehearsal room formerly used largely by one John Lennon. As associate of the 'Liverpool Poets' like Roger McCough and Adrian Henri, he soon moved beyond "straight music" through friendships and contacts in the literary and theatre worlds. Though playing in diverse pop bands, and sessioneering with the likes of 10cc, stage work attracted more and more, leading to work with the London Contemporary Dance Theatre, and the Lindsay Kemp Company.

During time with the latter he met mime artist Michael Matou: they formed their own company, Sideshow (in 1978) and a year later brought it to Australia where it formed the nucleus of a mad summer in inner city performance areas like Side FX and Garibaldi's, and went out in a blaze of deco glory at the last-but-one theatre season at the Tivoli.

With this depth of experience, a 'we can play anything' band and the divine Misses, the Dreams should be a highlight in the revival of cabaret-rock. . . "Don't use that nasty word 'cabaret'," says Suzette sternly. "It sounds like some tacky RSL act."

Gee, someone cut my nouns off. . . However, if a slice of colourjful sight'n'sound served with pizazz and relish is your cup of lunch, get out to it with the Dreams.

GREG TAYLOR.

Jaffa — Miss Mysteron '83! (Pic: Ian Greene)

THE MYSTERONS

Love The Name But Never Saw The Show!

ARRESTING THE EYE is Jaffa, literally throwing all she can around the stage.. Clad in a tight fitting black mini teamed with fishnets, on a good night she never stops moving.

She grew up in Melbourne under the best of singing coaches, and in her mid-teens travelled to the U.K. where she was exposed to Punk at first hand. Back in Australia at sixteen, she ran away from home.

Now eighteen, she has a remarkably developed voice which can growl, whimper, whisper and scream at will. There's a touch of Chrissie Hynde's 'Don't touch me, I'm too precious' air, and she's a welcome respite from the spate of soft-voiced female singers around who could've stepped out of *The Brady Bunch.*

The Mysterons take their name from the invisible good guys in the TV show, *Captain Scarlet And The Mysterons.* Curiously, founding members Robert Raynor and Mark Jessop never saw the show, but they liked the name. While still at school, Robert (who writes most of the material) followed bands like The Thought Criminals at the infamous (defunct) punk venue, The Grand, in Sydney's Haymarket. It was there he discovered the ingredients for his own band: passionate music and socially aware lyrics.

"It's really fashionable at the moment to say that politics and music don't mix," he says. "But that's not true at all. . . politics are unavoidable."

Mysterons' material touches on some pretty delicate issues, like vasectomy for instance. . .

"*Vasectomy* is a little story about a guy whose wife wants him to have a vasectomy because they have 17 kids. . .but he thinks it involves castration, when in fact it's a simple method of birth control which does *not* involve having your balls removed!"

Reggae/ska feels predominate in the music, and there are traces of the Pretenders lurking in there too. But the transition from a covers band to tough, original pop is well under way, and the shake-it-all-out stage energy has them bopping in the front rows of inner Sydney venues — unlike their namesake, The Mysterons can be seen *and* heard.

ARCH BROWN

THE WAIT
'Til The Pop Catches The Cult

Veda Mann: "Let's play piranhas. . ." (Pic: Ian Greene)

THERE ARE two things to note about talking with The Wait. The first is that asking them a question is like casting a fish into a tank full of otters. They'll grab it and play with it, with much splashing about and merriment, little glints of silver occasionally cresting the bubbles before slipping away from view once again, finally forever, leaving a tank of satisified, cheerful and *expectant* small animals. Toss 'em another.

The second is that increasingly, the conversation will come to resemble the opening credits of *Get Smart*. Open one set of doors and you're confronted with another. Ask a simple question, and it'll lead to the next — and the next and the next, each further deflecting the original angle. Details crop up which are irresistibly distracting and not a little disconcerting —*(so you had a band in Outer Mongolia? 'Five, actually, and one of them had a Top 10 hit in Serbia!')* Members of The Wait, it emerges, have notched up all sorts of bizarre achievements, from having babies and No.1 records and honours degrees to being shot at in Khartoum and Vietnam, to mooching around musically in Taipei, Noumea, Kuala Lumpur and ABC-TV programmes. And more besides.

The Wait is the latest in a series of bands for each of its four members, and it represents a different approach for them as musicians.

"We basically selected an area which was common ground for all of us," explains lead guitarist and vocalist Paul Dengate, "which we could move *into*, but which we hadn't actually played with before. A style of music that we liked — I think it's good, *up* pop — which none of us had done, but which we thought we could do together. The idea was that *that* way, we'd all be fairly fresh about what we're doing, and that it would carry through to the audience. And I think it does."

The Wait was formed about a year ago. Guitarist and vocalist Veda Mann, drummer Judy Costello and bassist Faye Reid were bandless in the wake of Metro's demise, and examining the reasons for that band's failure led to guidelines being set for the kind of outfit they wanted to try next.

"Metro wasn't commercial," considers Faye. "It was more a cult band; we used to play songs in 10/4 and that kind of thing, and although we had a ball, other people didn't. They liked it, they saw the musical ability, but we decided with The Wait that we wanted something more *fun*, which lots of people could dance to."

"I'd known Faye and Judy for a while," says Paul, scooping up the fish like a good little otter, "and we decided that as a band we could do something very. . .happy, warm, up and *together!* There just aren't enough *up* bands around!"

"There's not too many fun bands," agrees Faye. "We wanted people to enjoy themselves, and we enjoy ourselves too."

Having decided to embark on The Wait, the four discussed the project at length and then devoted eight months to rehearsal. They aimed to deliver accessible, optimistic pop, and to achieve that they had to adapt in some ways their previous approach to music.

Paul Dengate: "Whaddya mean 'small expectant animal'?" (Pic; Ian Greene)

"What we're trying to do is to play songs which are enjoyable to us as musicians, so it's satisfying to ourselves, but to make them sound simple," Faye begins.

"We don't play *down* to people, at all," adds Paul. "We don't want the elevated star routine. The songs are written simply and played simply in the hope that in shitty, horrible rooms with banging walls you will still be able to hear the words, and if you like what it is, you'll take *home* something you like — go home happy."

"The band obviously is good musically," puts in Judy, "but we deliberately are not playing in ways we are capable of playing. We may do three-part harmonies, but we're trying to keep the feel direct."

The result is attractive: a fresh, bright set with only two covers, Tommy James and the Shondells' *I Think We're Alone Now*, and another hit from the 60s, the Supremes' *Love Child*. The band write collectively in rehearsal, in keeping with the mature, group approach they take to every aspect of The Wait.

"The band is a *band*," stresses Faye. "It takes all of us to make it work — including the road crew."

"We talked about these things a lot before we ever started playing," Paul nods. "We were definite we didn't want a band which just stayed together for a few weeks and then split up because everyone hated each other. We wanted something in which we'd all be involved in everything; we set out with that objective so The Wait could have a long life and there wouldn't be any gross traumas for *anyone*. . ."

ELLY McDONALD

SPEEDBOAT
-Cranking Up The Meat Machine

SYDNEY'S "COMFORT Rock" headquarters, the Tivoli, played host to Speedboat a couple of weeks back. Sadly, it played host to hardly anyone else, apart from myself and a score of devoted Speedboat persons. No one seemed to be there to see Sardine, who were the main act. Sad, because Speedboat are quite a nifty outfit, and receptions like that might make them think twice about straying too far from their Adelaide base again anytime soon.

I'm a real sucker for acts like this, or any rock event that pushes a horn player or two up front. Consequently, as part of my project to encourage screaming horn sections to take over every pub on the continent, I'm prone to give them all the benefit of the doubt on ticklish questions of style, talent, and whether or not they really know what they're doing.

There are a few minor doubts when it comes to Speedboat's Tivoli show, but let's give them the benefit of most of them. The mix wasn't crash hot, as someone buried behind a desk somewhere seemed to have fallen in love with the reverb control. But then, they *were* the support act, and support bands often get the short end of the mix. One of the guitars was badly out of tune for a while; that, I admit was a bit harder to come to grips with.

The horns, on the other hand, were fat, chunky, and everything they should have been. Speedboat's original arrangements are great, and writing for sax and trumpet isn't one of rock's easiest chores. Sax man Craig Tidswell really knows his onions, and at times seemed to be carrying the gig single-handed. This raises an interesting dilemma, which is that the standard of playing in the band varies pretty wildly from muso to muso. It isn't that Speedboat is a vehicle for horn players by design, it just seems that way because the horns figure more than anything else.

This becomes a little too obvious at times. I mean, funk tune gets under way, horns play the head, sax solo starts, everything's mighty. Then you realise, "Hey, this is slowing down! No, it's sped up again. . ."

The best front line in the world will disintegrate when a funk rhythm section loses its grip. This happened early in the Tivoli gig, when a song called *Trash Bins* almost completely capsized before being righted in time to deliver the twisted tonality that was the point of the whole exercise. The ending was tight, the net effect great, but you're left with the niggling feeling that the rhythm section could collapse at any moment.

A meeting in a beer garden the next day saw Speedboat doing their best to drink their way out of a hangover of monumental proportions. At least I assume that's what it was; if not, these guys are in serious medical trouble. A far cry indeed from the sparkling, effervescent young guys described in their press release. Like the Craig Tidswell of the promo blurb, "Whaddya want? — 1950s strip club horn, a Salvation Army pale-ache, the birth of the cool brass playing the beer barrel oompah-pah polka, the formalism of 20th Century classical music? All these elements and more talk, honk, squeak, moan, excite and soothe when Mr. Tidswell plays a lick or two. . ."

How does one square this monument of P.R. with the fellow across the pub bench, whose puffy black eye is staring wildly into the middle distance? While drummer Tom Stehlik is billed as a man who "discards the rigours of technique", the talk was dominated by trumpet player Roger Ellis, who seemed to have suffered the least damage the night before. Well, he seemed to have the most facility in stringing a few syllables together, anyway. The upshot of the rave seemed to be that Speedboat want "to sell lots of records and make lots of money", as Roger put it. A pretty good game plan, and one that explains the heavy dose of straight-ahead pop material in their show. If they really want to sell lots of records and make lots of money, they'll probably have to decide one way or the other whether they're a funk/rock meat machine or a pop band with horn players.

I'm a meat machine man meself, because when luck was on their side at the Tivoli, some of the funk stuff was categorically enormous. There's not much money in it, but there's not much money in rock'n'roll full stop. You may as well do what you're good at. Besides, concentrating on the funk/rock material would go a long way to tightening up the rhythm section, which is something they'll have to get around to sooner or later.

If all this sounds like I'm giving Speedboat a hard time, I'm not. I reckon they're heaps of fun and should be checked out. It's just that when you see a band that's on the brink of being a first rate affair, it's hard to stop yourself putting in your two cents' worth. Speedboat are a band that's still under construction, and can only get better. I'll be there with bells on next time they pass through.

PAT SHEIL

Speedboat — Tom Stehlik, Paul Corduff, Craig Tidswell, Roger Ellis, Arnold Strals, Mark McCann.

Putting It Up The Duke

HAYSI FANTAYSEE explain why John Wayne walked that way, and various other aspects of 'devil sex' to CAROL CLERK.

HAYSI FANTAYZEE would love to be able to fool all of the people all of the time. . .and tell the joke later.

Always happy with a fast trick up their sleeves and a good reason to smirk at an unsuspecting public, they were in their element in the early release weeks of *John Wayne Is Big Leggy*.

On first encounter and without special scrunity, the single could've been misinterpreted as a whimsical if charming piece of nursery rhyme performed cutely by a little pair of white people in dreadlocks. But then came the explanations. And *that dance* on *Top Of The Pops;* a dance which came as close as the cameras would allow to a simulation of anal sex.

"By the time people found out what it was about, it was too late for the radio to stop playing it, and too late for people to stop buying it," grinned Jeremiah with relish.

"It was a perverted sort of song," enthused his female conspirator, Kate. "People kept saying we were writing nonsense lyrics, but we didn't explain anything because if they knew, it wouldn't have got played. Afterwards we did an interview on the radio and said what it was about.

"We wrote the song after we read *Hollywood Babylon*. We also read somewhere that John Wayne used to give money to the Ku Klux Klan."

"He was such a good hero," added Jeremiah. "He was a real archetypal American hero...a real, cool, over-the-top Citizen Kane type person. And at the end he was killed by his country. We thought that was really funny."

Kate: "If we'd said 'John Wayne is a bad man, he's a fucking cunt', it wouldn't have gone on the radio. But if we go 'He stands so high', people go 'Isn't it a lovely little tune. . .'We thought it was so funny, people thinking it was a fun song.

"People would never understand it, 'cos they wouldn't listen to the lyrics. The doorman at the BBC said 'Oh, you're the John Wayne fans' and we were saying 'Oh, *great*'. . ."

Haysi Fantayzee have the greatest contempt for the American mentality; for its hero-worship, for its complacency and for its attitude, past and present, towards its minority groups.

"The song is partly about John Wayne having so many guns on the front of his body that he couldn t fuck the Injun in the normal way, and he wouldn't take the guns off," explained Kate. "He said 'Turn over and you'll know why'."

That was the significance of the dance on *Top Of The Pops*.

"They warned us about dancing like that," said Kate. "But we should have gone on there again and made it *worse*."

"They tried to foil us all the time," said Jeremiah. "They tried to get the wacky camera angle. So in the end, we did the radio interview and explained what the song was about. When you consider the soft porn dancers they have on that programme, their attitudes are pathetic."

The current single, *Holy Joe*, sounds lots different to *John Wayne*, not least because of its sex emphasis. But this is all part of the band's policy of being inventive in every song; dropping the influences of the last one to create a freshness in the new one. True to form, Haysi have supplied a thought to ponder.

"It's about a preacher man," says Kate. "He's like Satan in disguise. We got it from preachers on TV in America asking for donations. They're handsome, and what they're really selling is sex.

"Some deejay said on the radio today, 'We've been trying to find out if there's anything subversive about this song, but we can't hear anything'. He must be fucking thick!

"For the third song, we might bring out something perfectly innocent, and they'll all be looking. . ."

Fantayzee sandwich, no dressing.

Jeremiah and Kate (Pix: Simon Fowler/LFI)

Just like that preacher man, Haysi Fantayzee are selling sex. Jeremiah will tell you it's the most important element of the music.

"I don't think we're showing a very acceptable side of sex," decided Kate. "When Jeremiah grinds his hips and has those old jeans on, it's Beelzebub sex."

Jeremiah: "If you listen to most contemporary music, it's mostly about love, which I think is wrong. It's like housewives' music. She can think of it while she's ironing; thinking of her husband who's at the office. I think that kind of music is a fraud.

"I don't know if I believe in love. I know from most people that what they call love is convenience. I don't think I've ever been in love. I might look back in two years' time and say 'I was in love'."

"Love is like security and things like that," declared Kate. "A lot of the time, it's infatuation. When your heart goes 'boom boom' and you want to meet the person again, that's sex, not love.

"I agree with Jeremiah. People like songs about love because it's undisturbing. Songs like *Little Red Rooster* aren't very good for housewives to listen to because they might want to fuck someone other than their husbands."

Mind you, for all her cynicism, Kate won't deny that there *might* exist this thing called love.

"I think there is love and affection," she concedes. "It's just that that big wonderful feeling that people think about and call love is more sex. I think you judge love when you can judge how much you would miss a person if they died."

Kate lives with Paul Caplin, the third member and mastermind behind Haysi Fantayzee. I asked what her feelings were for him.

"For Paul, I feel compatibility," she concluded. "He's the first person I've met that I'm compatible with. If you can live and work with someone without killing them, that's quite amazing.

"I couldn't live with Jeremiah. I'd kill him. We'd kill each other. We write songs together, but we're not compatible. Jeremiah in a lot of aspects is more grown-up than me, even though he's 20 and I'm seven years older. The hugeness of one experience can affect a person more than a lot of small ones."

On the subject of experience, it seemed obvious to ask Jeremiah about his friendship with Boy George, following a series of recent declarations by the Culture Clubber. It seemed obvious to ask about some of the implications. . .

So I took my courage between both hands (in a beer can) and inquired: "Are you gay?" Unfortunately, my professionalism deserted me at that point, my hands fidgeted in embarrassment and the ring-pull sliced into my finger.

"No I'm not," said Jeremiah as blood dripped from the offending digit and Kate ran for the sticking plasters with the comment that "You'd never get a job on the Daily Star".

"I'm not that bothered by what I read about myself," said the unnervingly calm Jeremiah. "It doesn't affect me any more. I *know* what I am. . ."

At this point, it seemed only fitting to ask Kate about the stories circulating about her and her involvement with nude photographs.

"I never thought there was anything wrong with nudity," she explained, ice-cool. "Photographers have always wanted to photograph me because I was so thin. It didn't look like pornography. It looked like art. The first video we made, I took my clothes off. We wanted to prove we were a video band, to get a deal."

"Our album cover's nude," offered Jeremiah. (It comes out in January.)

"I took the photograph of Jeremiah," said Kate. "It's really artistic. The proportions are funny. I look like a midget. And they artworked out my pubic hairs, they darkened out my groin area and they retouched all the hairs on my legs. They had to do it to get people to stock the album.

"What it's meant to look like is a reversal of roles. The usual thing is after the man has fucked a woman, he lights a cigarette. Well, on the sleeve, Jeremiah's at the front looking very beautiful and I'm at the back. . .the woman has had her satisfaction and she's lighting up *her* cigarette. . ."

I like Haysi Fantayzee. I like them because they know what they want, and they don't give a damn who they upset in the process of getting it. Is that okay?

Don't get your knickers in a knot over VANITY 6, warns KERI PHILLIPS, but check the people backing them.

Nasty Girls

OF ALL THE alliances rock has made in order to develop, change, survive, the one with soft core pornography must be one of the most curious. . .

You've probably seen the ads for the group — Vanity 6. Three girls in their underwear cast smouldering looks towards the camera. The sexual come-on is their game, expressed not only in their costumes, but also in the lyrics of songs like *Nasty Girl*, and *Bite The Beat* on their recently released debut album.

Although Vanity, Brenda and Susan (they go by first names only) have been together only eighteen months, their appeal is fantastic. *Nasty Girl*, a steamy sexual fantasy (*'I'm looking for a man that'll do it anywhere/Even on a limousine floor/'Cause tonight I'm livin' in a fantasy/ My own little nasty world'*), has been in the black charts in New York for over three months and is still in the Top 10.

Their recent New York show at the prestige rock club, the Ritz, pulled a sell-out crowd, and even though Vanity 6 were only the support act, it seemed that most of those who crushed in at the front of the stage were there to see the girls strut their stuff.

To understand Vanity 6, you have to go back a little in time and take a quick trip to Minneapolis, Minnesota, home of Prince — one of the most successful new black performers to cut it with white rock fans. Prince had met the three girls separately, and it was the management company that looks after *his* affairs that brought Brenda, Susan and Vanity together. Also brought in on the Vanity 6 "project" was The Time, another Minneapolis band who also happened to be Prince proteges, signed to the same management company.

The resulting Vanity 6 LP, with the girls singing and The Time providing the music, took off quite unexpectedly, creating a monster that no-one in the organisation seems to have been able to catch up with (yet). But with the careers of Prince, The Time and Vanity 6 on a roll, the obvious thing to do was to send them all out on tour together. So it is that Vanity 6 (backed by The Time) do the first set, The Time themselves come on next, and Prince wraps the whole thing up.

It's not quite as neat as it sounds, however, for a number of reasons. Firstly, while Vanity herself may be quite happy to work the audience just like any regular stripper, the other two girls are, if not unhappy over the whole sex schtick, at least not as comfortable on stage. At the Ritz, Susan (who is only sixteen) and Brenda look distinctly uneasy, as if they are doing something they know their mothers wouldn't like.

The whole set lasts just twenty minutes, a quick run-through of the songs on the album, not even stopping for breath, then offstage at the double. No encores. Vanity, who looks as though she has copped more than a few moves from da Prince himself, runs through all the peep-show cliches, things like riding the mike stand and so on. It's all pretty tacky, really.

I CATCH UP with Brenda when the groups pulls in to New Orleans. They only have time for brief phone calls as they criss-cross the country, and it took me many weeks of infuriating organisation to even get this close to them. She sounds tired, and when I discover that they have had only one night off in the last three months, and that some nights they do two shows, I'm not surprised. She tells me she's found a fabulous lingerie shop in New Orleans called Rue de Paris, providing the cue to ask the burning question about their predilection for showing off their knickers.

"I have to say it's basically Vanity's idea," Brenda confides. "She's always been into lingerie. I mean, you'll hear her telling stories about how she used to steal it out of her mother's drawer and sneak it off to wear at school.

"As far as I'm concerned, it doesn't matter one way or the other, I can take it or leave it.

"But it *is* comfortable onstage, that's for sure. You get hot and sweaty anyway, but when you're wearing stage clothes, the clothes get heavy on you. You feel like you've got weights on you."

The sexy image, as Brenda has already found out, does have some drawbacks. People tend to take it seriously.

"Sometimes it can be a problem. People overemphasise the connotations behind the lyrics — They think we're hookers or something.

"But this is only what we're talking about on one particular album, and a lot of it is fantasy. But we're pretty well protected as far as people getting to us or anything. People take it

Vanity 6 — Brenda, Vanity and Susan — demonstrate the come-hither-but-not-without-your-wallet look.

overboard sometimes, but we did expect that this would happen."

The prospect of an enduring future prancing about in her smalls does not sound like Brenda's idea of a good time, and she does have aspirations for Vanity 6 that transcend their current image.

"The songs on the next album could be about anything," she says. "I don't want to say too much about it, because it should be a surprise. But most of the songs on our first LP were written by us separately, before Vanity 6 got going. Now we have been doing things together as a group and this should have an effect on our next lot of songs."

Don't break out the flags just yet though, because the thing Vanity 6 have been experiencing together is life on the road, inspiration for some of the worst songs ever recorded. Can we stand the thought of *'Three Girls' Sexual Fantasies On The Road'*?

Brenda says the group's instant success certainly took them all by surprise, and admits that lack of preparation could have something to do with the fact that they are doing such short sets.

"But, " she continues, "it also seems like a good idea to us to just go out, freak 'em out, and then disappear. And this ploy *has* been working, because people come up to us and say: 'You're not onstage long enough. We want to see more.' And that's one of the reasons why we do it."

Contrary to my impressions, Brenda claims to enjoy live work. "I would like to do a longer show," she says. "I'm very at home onstage. I *love* being onstage. With this project, I would like to be out for a regular forty-minute set.

"Now, it's odd. It feels like we just run out there, get sweaty and come back off. We say 'Hi, bye' and that's it. I feel like we haven't said much. I guess we'll work up to it."

Prince, she says, is not really involved with Vanity 6 at all: "He was, though, instrumental in getting us all introduced to each other. And he does come down to the studio and listen to what we are doing. We had all met him individually in different parts of the country and we all had demo tapes. He turned them over to his management company and *they* were the people that I heard from."

While Prince may not have any active directorial role, Vanity 6 and Vanity herself have certainly borrowed heavily from the master. The sexual tease used to great affect by Prince in *his* inexorable rise is copied almost exactly, even though its effect when performed by women is quite different.

With Prince it's initially intriguing, because although he's become increasingly strident in his heterosexuality, there was a certain teasing femininity (he used to literally do a strip onstage, peeling off to the delighted squeals of the crowd to reveal the skimpy black briefs beneath) unexpected in a man. In the hands of Vanity 6 though, it's just straight out erotic bump 'n' grind, a bunch of singing strippers, turning on an audience with tired old porn palace moves — Porno Pop.

Without the Prince connection, and through him, the tie-up with The Time, Vanity 6 would not even be worth writing about (as the 'Heavy Dude' in the Times Square shop where I buy my 12-inch singles said disparagingly: "Vanity 6? They're just burlesque.") But the music of Prince and The Time is both "significant" and genuinely terrific. Ignore the silly lyrics (since when have we looked to pop music for politically relevant lyrics?), and what you have is a marvellous synthesis of black and white music, unequalled since the days of Jimi Hendrix. Black dance rhythms mix with strong melodies, voices and keyboards getting as much time as bass and drums. You end up with all the best elements of dance floor synthesiser rock and meaty backbeat-driven funk.

While this little coterie of musicians hardly constitutes the arrival of the "Minneapolis sound" that people are already writing about, it is interesting that such good stuff is coming from black musicians brought up in a town where there's plenty of Grand Funk Railroad, but little black music, on the radio. Although Vanity 6 may have little staying power, especially if they put their clothes back on and dispense with the titillation that's fuelling the rocket under their career, the musicians they're currently riding with are worth watching.

Get It Up And Beat Me Music

BERLIN
Pleasure Victim
(Enigma; distributed by Monash)
VANITY 6
Vanity 6
(WEA)

The word pornography comes from the Greek, meaning "writing about prostitutes". . . This gives us a useful distinction from erotica: pornography's basic motive is making money.

Despite much association — *'If music be the food of love, play on!'* etc. — music is more likely to accompany carnal movements than to provoke them. In its pure form, music is the one art with which it is virtually impossible to be pornographic: you need lyrics and/or suggestive sound effects to provoke the brain's lust centres.

Bawdy ballads were around before Man could rhyme four-letter words, and heavy breathing and moaning have doubtless been used by singers at more licentious gatherings from times equally immemorable. But for all the hysteria rock'n'roll has raised about it being sexually inspired and a menace to morals, it's actually been fairly unexplicit. The Bible's *Song Of Solomon* would be far more likely to get banned from the airwaves these days than anything by the Rolling Stones.

Modern rock-pop, perhaps operating on the fairly safe assumption that most listeners are illiterate, doesn't even go in for the heavy innuendo of cabaret and dancehall music from the first half of the century: Donna Summer is a pale substitute for Bessie Smith et al, cavorting to something like *Don't You Feel My Leg ('Cos You'll Want To Feel My Thigh)*, or chirping about *'squeezing your lemon till the juice run down your leg'*.

At the straight sleaze end of the business, you can probably purchase a tape purporting to be conkeys screwing ten-year-olds in a vat of chocolate icecream — *if that's what turns you on, babee!* — but over-the-counter horny records are still fairly isolated, fairly tame. (As Jim Morrison found out, our totally weird notions of indecency let him bellow *'Mother. . . I want to kill you'* in *The End*, but would ha ve melted the record *and* the Doors down if he'd uttered the obviously intended *'Mother. . . I want to fuck you'*.)

But a couple of recent releases indicate that carnal pop is happy to say what it means, and to do it in a la Centrefold style, if not a la Hooker.

When you're onto a good thing — sit on it' would have to be the motto of former *Penthouse* Pet Terri Nunn. Now the voice of an L.A.-based trio called BERLIN, Nunn is pumping out some aural equivalents of the Big Spread on their debut album *Pleasure Victim*, and doing promotions which offer "Dinner with Terri Nunn" as first prize. To win Terri you had to describe her, (with the inspiration of a photo similar to the one on this page), and her record company gleefully claim that the checklist of possible terms was "censored" by feminist sympathisers at the *L.A. Weekly*.

Berlin claim the promotion was a satire on sexploitive ad techniques, but you don't have to be Frank Zappa or work at *National Lampoon* to know that 'satirical' tits-and-ass sells just as well as the 'serious' sort.

Certainly, there's nothing very satirical about Berlin's lyrics. Only about half the songs are overtly about sex, but when it appears it's mainly masochistic, I'm your toy, do-what-you-will-with-me stuff — hey, I mean, what kind of man reads *Playboy*? Lines like *'Tear me open and leave me here to bleed/Cut me up, cut me down to size'* are a bit of a worry as are *'Torture, torture, twisted love/Kiss me, kick me, feel my blood'*, but the song which sums up the whole stick-book schtick has to be *Sex (I'm A. . .)*

'I'm a toy, come and play with me, say the word now/Wrap your legs around mine and ride me tonight' is Terri's opening invitation: the verse involves one of her male colleagues bellowing *'I'm a man!'* repeatedly while Terri responds with a whole sequence of compliant fantasies — *'I'm a teaser/virgin/one night stand/a drug/your slave/dream divine/slut/hooker/a little girl. . .'* Plus plenty of background *'Do it to me! Do it to me! Yes! I see God'* blather in case you were a bit underwhelmed.

Just how erotic all this is depends on what *you're* sitting on. It *is* vaguely Ultravox-with-sparkle, Ms. Nunn is no slouch in the singing dept. — but whatever their musical ambitions, Berlin have decided their product is best sold through titillation.

Berlin's fur-wrapped dinner prize

VANITY 6 ARE up off the satin sheets and doorway-lounging in lingerie from Fredericks. Like Berlin, their debut album's musical competence is overshadowed by the porno scam. Unlike the West Coast panters, it's all a bit funnier. *He's So Dull*, the single recently aired in Oz, is slyly innocuous, but the opening track, *Nasty Girl*, goes merrily over the top. *'I'm looking for a man who'll do it anywhere/Even on a limousine floor. . . That's right, I can't control it/I need seven inches or more. . . Get it up, get it up/I can't wait anymore'*.

If A Girl Answers (Don't Hang Up) could only raise a laugh; *Wet Dream*, despite the title, is another caricature of bobby-soxer innocence (like *He's So Dull*); and *Bite The Beat* has the double meaning one might expect *('Tastes like caviar. . .')*

But the other three tracks are slightly more dubious. Trio member Susan pens and sings two morbid little ditties (*Drive Me Wild* and *Make-Up)* which take Berlin's *'I'm your toy'* into some sad robot bondage area. And *3 x 2 6*, the album closer, is just bizarre. Suddenly these three are getting all soft and sorrowful 'bout the *'Tribulations of the working girl/Gotta put up with the male man's tricks'*! Yes. Virginia, you can have your cake and suck it too.

GREG TAYLOR

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RAPPIN' IT UP WITH THE Rappers, DJs, B-Boys & Break Mixers

FRANK BRUNETTI on the the talkover technique that's swept off the dance floor and onto the airwaves

THERE'S A METAL detector out front and all weapons must be checked at the door. By midnight, the place is packed. Grandmaster Flash takes the stage, behind his twin turntables and mixing desk, and starts spinning discs.

But this is no ordinary DJ. He never allows a track to play all the way through, in fact he rarely allows one to play for more than thirty seconds! He just selects the bits he wants from each one, and then casts it aside for the next.

The music ranges from the most obscure funk to the crassest pop, taking in along the way Blondie, Chic, Sly Stone, The Tom Tom Club, James Brown, Kraftwerk, The Four Tops and Queen.

But where's the band? There is none.

Flash himself *is* the music. He 'plays' the turntables, grabbing them with his hands, moving them backwards and forwards to produce weird noises, jumping from one to the other with headphones askew, manoeuvring the needle back and forth to exactly the right spots, starting off with the dramatic string intro to *It's A Man's Man's Man's Man's World*, going into the synth riff from *Genius Of Love*, then the chorus from *Stand!*, followed by the instrumental break from *Rebels Are We* repeated five times over, then something from Kraftwerk's *Pocket Calculator*. He mixes them all up with other, using silences as effectively as sounds and always, *always* right on the beat!

Against this seemingly impossible, crazy patchwork quilt of sound, the Furious Five take the stage mikes in hand to a resounding cheer from the audience. Hell! Most of the Five grew up within a few blocks of here. Their wardrobe is almost as variable as Flash's rap-ertoire.

They start off together, not singing but rapping, raving, talking, but always on that *beat*, swapping lines with the effortless precision and split second timing of the best vocal groups. Then the one dressed in jeans and gymboots steps to the fore:

'Got waterbed seats in my limousine
Everytime I'm seen I got to be clean
I tour around the world to make people dance
And here's a little message for the ladies in France
Je m'appelle
Melly Mel.'

Next it's the one in quasi bondage gear:

'I'm Mister
N — E — double S,
Come on, fly girls
And put me to the test.'

One by one, each of the Five takes the lead and gives the rundown on who he is: Then they all begin to rap on harmony again, to give us the relevant facts on the man behind the mixer:

'Grandmaster Flash is willing and able
He's the king of the cuts on two turntables
He's so good with his hand
He don't need no band
Rocks forty-five and thirty-three
Rocks boys and women and young ladies
He can slice so precise, it's almost funny.'

The audience's response to this is total! Dancing is a completely inadequate word to describe the acrobatic somersaults, leaps, spins, kicks and drops they are liable to do. Next to these kids, the energetic rockabilly dancers of the fifties look like clod-hopping pogoers. They are as important to the performance as the six dudes up on the stage, yelling out advice and requests, passing the mikes around, giving forth with their own raps. This chaotic fiesta of noise, energy and excitement will go on until at least six or seven in the morning.

It's Wednesday night at **Disco Fever**, the home of Rap in that part of New York City known as the Bronx. Even though their fame is beginning to spread right across the globe, hell, even to Australia, Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five still appear here every week they're in town.

Papa Gets A Brand New Little Black Bag!

'Here is the sound you been waiting for
It gives you what you need plus a whole lot more
It took you by surprise when it first came out
But now it feels so good you wanna shout!'

The Bronx, although it is just across the river from the mythical island of Manhattan, is a million miles removed from that (downtown) fantasy land of wealth and power. Part residential neighbourhood and part urban wasteland, it is dominated by obsolete housing projects, burnt out buildings and vacant lots strewn with garbage. It is one of many dumping grounds for the worst of New York's ills — paranoia, violence, crime, drugs and alienation are part of the fabric of its everyday existence. Life there is such that sudden and violent deaths often occur for seemingly no reason at all.

'Broken glass everywhere, people pissing on the stairs
You know they just don't care
I can't take the smell I can't take the noise
I got no money to move out I guess I got no choice
Rats in the front room roaches in the back
Junkies in the alley with the baseball bat'.

IT was here that men with wondrous names such as **Count Coolout, Grandmaster Flash, Doctor Ice** and **Afrika Bambaataa** teamed with musical street gangs like the **Furious Five** and the **Soul Sonic Force** to give birth to their own hybrid, a curious and fascinating collision of 60s soul and funk, 70s disco and the tangents and angularities of the 80s.

They had become concerned about the critical condition of their music since the heyday of slick mid-70s disco had passed, leaving a vacuum in its wake. Observing the symptoms and seeing no assistance was forthcoming from the eminent specialists in the field, they decided to operate.

'In medical school I didn't learn about bodies
They taught me how to operate parties. . .
When I get on the mike I don't talk no jive
Gonna operate to make the dead come alive. . .'

THERE'S A RIOT GOIN' ON: The Black Spades And The Deans Of Scream

It was the smack that did it, only in those days it was called H, or *horse*. It blew the Harlem and Bronx street gangs of the rockin' 50s into oblivion. Those members who survived either went straight and became family men or else graduated into the higher echelons of crime. Those who didn't, well, they just died.

They began to reform in the late 60s, a new generation going under names like the Black Spades and the Royal Charmers. For five years they fought, gunned and bombed each other up and down the Bronx, which was nicknamed 'Li'l Vietnam' in their honour. Many died — at each others' hands and at those of the cops.

Afrika Bambaataa was a member of The Black Spades. Jay McGluery, who was Warlord of the Bronx River division of the Spades before he quit to join the Marines, remembers Bambaataa well. "He wasn't really gung-ho. . .He was into communications. . .we always went over to his house to party. He had every record you could want to hear. James Brown and Sly Stone were his favourites."

Bambaataa continued running with the Black Spades until 1975 when his best friend, 'Soulski', was shot nine times by a couple of cops on Pelham Parkway.

That was the year the street gangs disappeared like a floating crap game the instant the cops arrived. They had discovered something much better.

'We want to rock YOU!
We're the kings of swing
And we don't sit to rule
The deans of scream
Inside the cool school'.

Kool Herc And The Herculoids

In 1975, the DJ joined the crim, the athlete and the singer as a hero and role model for the street kids of the Bronx. With two turntables, a mixer and a boxful of funk and disco hits, you could soon have a cult following. The first one in Bambaataa's neighborhood, Bronx River, was **Kool Dee.**

But the first DJ who was into 'rapping' over the 'breaks' was **Kool Herc**, over in the West Bronx. (The 'break' is that section of a disco or funk track where all the other instruments drop out, leaving the bass and drums to carry the riff for anywhere from fifteen seconds to five minutes.)

Herc moved from Jamaica to New York in the late 60s. In his home town of Kingston, the DJs had perfected the art of 'toasting' (their word for rapping) over instrumental and dub versions of reggae and ska hits. When Herc got to the Big Apple however, he found that the brothers would not tolerate Jamaican music in any form, so he adapted this technique to the soul and funk they were into.

Herc had a sound system called 'Herculoids'. He would stand at its twin turntables playing the breaks over and over again while raving into a mike connected to an echo chamber, telling jokes and babbling in slang faster than a raving speed freak: "Rock on, my mellow! This is the joint!"

Soon he employed two fulltime MCs, **Coke La Rock** and **Clark Kent**. They were the first rap group.

'Like the man with the Super S on his cape
We gonna rock to the funk and we got no escape
I'll rock them all with the greatest of ease
It's DJ Rock with the master beat'.

Hip Hops And B-Bops

Lots of kids in the Bronx were looking for something to do. Kool Herc and his group inspired many of them to try DJ-ing and rapping. His famous parties also gave birth to a new type of dancer called the **B-boy** or break dancer. Grand Mixer **'D.ST.'** was one of the original B-boys...

"Herc would play disco with a B-bop. When *Apache* (by the Incredible Bongo Band) came on, everybody would form a circle and the B-boys would go into the centre.

"At first, the dance was simple: touch your toes, hop kick out your leg. Then some guy went down, spun around on all fours. Everybody said 'Wow!' and went home to try and come up with something better.

"At first you'd be in the centre for a half minute, then a minute, then two minutes. People started puttin' *perfection* into the dance."

Break dancing became a highly athletic and acrobatic performance, requiring fitness and co-ordination. It replaced violence as an expression of teenage energy and frustration.

The B-boys, rappers, DJs and graffiti artists of the Bronx formed a new subculture: Hip Hop.

'Do the hip hop, hip hop, don't stop
Don't stop that body rock.'

DJ BATTLES: Disco King Mario -V- Herman Munster & The Godfather Of Soul

In 1976, Afrika Bambaatta formed the Zulu Nation. The Zulus were a street gang but they weren't into fighting, they were into music and dancing. That year he graduated from Bronx River High School, got his own sound system and became a DJ himself. By 1977, DJs, rappers and break dancers were proliferating in the Bronx. The DJ battles, which Bam describes as 'a lot of confusion', came to replace gang rumbles.

Two DJs and their rapping crews would meet at a venue, setting up their systems at opposite ends of the room. They would both start spinning discs and rapping at the same time, both volumes cranked up to maximum force.

During his celebrated battle against Disco King Mario, Bam started with the whistled theme song from the *Andy Griffith Show*, mixing it with a funky drum beat from the other turntable; he then went into the Munsters' theme music and followed that with James Brown's *I Got The Feeling*.

His juxtaposition of the Godfather Of Soul with Herman Munster astonished the audience and won him the first of many battles.

Little Sylvia & The Ghetto Blasters

Sylvia Robinson had thought there would be more to the entertainment business than this. She had started out on Atlantic in the fifties as Little Sylvia, a thirteen-year-old r'n'b belter. In 1956, as part of **Mickey & Sylvia,** she had a million seller with *Love Is Strange*. Her next hit came eighteen years later with *Pillow Talk*, the first example of the 'sexy' disco genre.

So, being a smart woman, she used the royalties from *Pillow Talk* to set up her own label, All Platinum Records, which had a number of disco hits in the mid-70s, most notably *Shame Shame Shame* by Shirley and Co.

At this stage, recorded rap existed only on cassettes taped live at gigs. These would be played on the giant portable cassette decks known as **'ghetto blasters'**. The very first rap record was *King Tim III*, released in 1979 by mainstream funksters **The Fatback Band.**

The same year, All Platinum became **Sugar Hill,** named from an area in Harlem, and had its first hit with the **Sugar Hill Gang**, a trio of rappers who were actually from New Jersey. *Rapper's Delight* — with its backing track lifted from Chic's *Good Times* — became a nationwide hit, selling 2,000,000 copies and establishing Sugar Hill as the strongest rap label.

The other main rap label, **Enjoy**, is run by Bobby Robinson, a Harlem record store owner and producer who in the 60s had helped discover Gladys Knight and the Pips. He discovered and issued the first records by the Funky Four Plus One and Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five. Although both groups have since moved on to greater success at Sugar Hill, Enjoy still commands a sizeable army of rappers, fast talkers and DJs with names like **The Treacherous Three, Kurtis Blow** (who had a hit in 1980 with The Breaks), **Sha-Rock** (the first female rapper), **T-Ski, Jun-Bug,** the **Disco Four, Sweet G, Kool Kyle, Starski** and **Disco Bee.**

The Coming of Grandmaster Flash

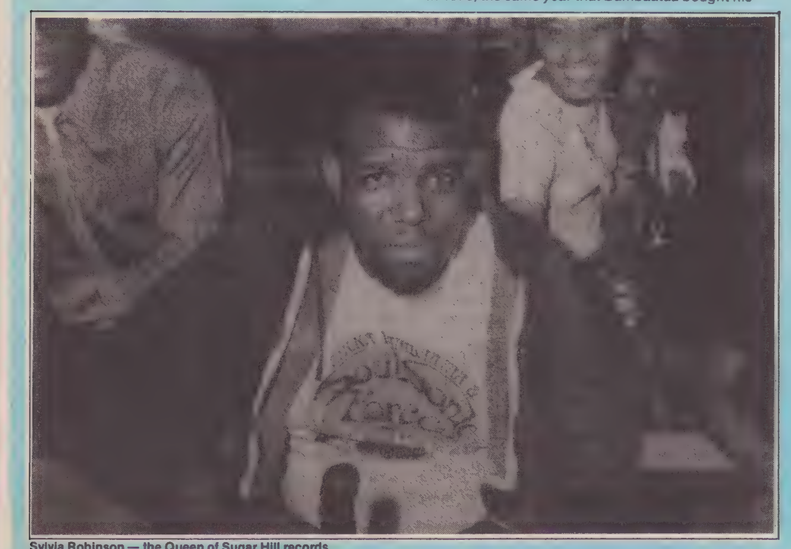
In 1976, the same year that Bambaataa bought his sound system, another eighteen-year-old would-be DJ got one of his own. He was born Joseph Saddler, but he would soon be known around the world by his *real* name, Grandmaster Flash.

'Flash is fast
Flash is cool
Francois, c'est pas
Flash ain't no dude'.

The machine came from a bombed-out building, had a 24-channel mixer and pumped out 1100 watts of pure glorious sound. He would take that monster into abandoned apartment blocks and throw parties where he would crank up the volume until the very foundations rumbled in protest: "It was *ridiculously too* loud, but I loved it."

Flash and his pals weren't into the then dominant sounds of slick, adult-oriented disco. Their spiritual source was the tough hardcore funk of, you guessed it, James Brown and Sly Stone.

He soon outgrew the apartment buildings and went out into the local parks, where he'd plug the monster into a handy power cable or street light. It was here that Flash was joined by **Cowboy**, the first of the Furious Five. And it was here too that he invented and perfected his trade mark, 'break mixing' or 'the quick mix'.



Sylvia Robinson — the Queen of Sugar Hill records

Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five

BREAK MIXING — The Art Of The Quick Mix On The Wheels Of Steel

Most adult-oriented-disco DJs were in the practice of smoothly blending one track into another to provide non-stop dance music. The funkier DJs like Kool Herc would just slam the needle down in the middle of the record or wherever they supposed the breaks to be.

Flash combined these two approaches by applying the timing of the smoother DJs to the hard core funk of Kool Herc. Over the years, he has developed this craft to the point where he can put the needle down on precisely any section of a track he wants, seemingly by intuition.

It's a technique best demonstrated on the revolutionary 1981 single *The Adventures Of Grandmaster Flash On The Wheels Of Steel*. When I first heard it, I thought it had been done with tape loops, splices and edits. When I found out it had been recorded live with just two turntables, I couldn't believe it — until I heard a live tape of one of his performances.

On *Wheels Of Steel*, Flash de-constructs tracks by Blondie, Chic, Queen, etc: it's an aural equivalent of William S. Burroughs' cut-up methods. The overall effect is similar to watching television while constantly changing channels by remote control until four or five different programmes become one new programme, a single reality: a (re)construction with its own unique identity.

With this track, Flash successfully took funk and disco into a realm of the avant-garde, completely sidestepping the attendant pitfalls of appearing twee or pretentious.

Bambaataa Strikes Back

Meanwhile Bambaataa was mighty pissed off. His recording debut, *Zulu Nation Throwdown*, with the Soul Sonic Force, (recorded in 1980, but not released until 1981) had been messed around with by some interfering producer at Winley Records. So he joined up with Tommy Boy Records and, being an intelligent dude, put a lot of thought into his next disc. He wanted to tap the increasing market for rap amongst white record buyers so, he reasoned, he would use white music as well as funk in the construction of the track.

The backing consisted of snatches of music from Kraftwerk, Captain Sky and the theme from *The Good, The Bad & the Ugly* mixed up with synths and drum machines. The Soul Sonic Force came up with a new rapping technique to fit this track. The resulting combination, *Planet Rock*, issued in May 1982, was an instant hit. It's one of the strangest and most atmospheric pieces of music: a funky electronic jungle, a fast taxi ride through the streets of the urban Vietnam in the middle of the night.

"*Planet Rock* is the most rootsy folk music around, the only music that's coming out of New York City which has tapped, and directly related to, that guy in the streets with his ghetto blaster.

"The record is like an adventure story; it's like that guy walking down the street. And if Elvis Presley was that in the fifties, then Afrika Bambaataa is that for the eighties. This music has a magical air about it because it's not trapped by the preconditioning and evaluation of what a pop record has to be."

— Malcolm McLaren (creator of the Sex Pistols and Bow Wow Wow) at the 1982 New Music Seminar in New York.

Afrika Bambaataa

Flash had built up a huge following in the parks and was soon convinced by his future manager, who rejoiced in the name of 'Raymond Chandler', to move into the Bronx clubs and discos. He assembled the Furious Five and they started charging for their gigs.

'It was in my heart from the very start
I could super sell at the top of the charts
Rappin' on the mike makin' cold cold cash
With a jock spinnin' for me called DJ Flash'.

Their first single, *Superrappin'*, came out on Bobby Robinson's Enjoy label, but they subsequently moved to Sugar Hill. Rumours of their gigs began to spread among the hip white underground of New York, but their first performance to a caucasian audience, supporting the Clash at Bond's in N.Y., was a disaster. The 'young Americans' who had come to partake of the Clash's rituals threw cans at Flash and the Five and called them 'niggers'. In a spirit of unprecedented generosity, Flash didn't blame the audience, figuring instead that it was his fault for spinning funk discs instead of punk discs.

Flash has issued a series of singles since joining Sugar Hill, the best of which are *Freedom* and *The Adventures Of Grandmaster Flash On The Wheels Of Steel*. However, it is their most recent single, *The Message*, which is their career highpoint, both artistically and commercially.

Don't Push Me 'Cause I'm Close To The Edge!

The Message follows in the tradition of James Brown's *King Heroin*, two long unavailable albums by the Last Poets and most of Gil Scott Heron's recorded output: a genre we might inadequately refer to as 'Rap Protest'.

Over an austere yet spine snappingly hard bass-and-drum track, illuminated occasionally by siren-like synths, Flash and the Five declaim a series of vignettes depicting the REALities of ghetto existence, each verse more nightmarish and claustrophobic than the last.

The music provides the backdrop of the city streets; the lyrics, etched in stark relief, depict each detail of this tragedy. These details pile up relentlessly until the last verse which summarises the life and death of one more victim. . .*'Turned stick-up kid, look what you done did/Got sent up for an eight year bid/Now your manhood is took and you're a maytag/Spend the next two years as an undercover fag/Used and abused to serve like hell/Until one day you was found lying hung in your cell/It was plain to see that your life was lost/You were cold and your body swung back and forth/Now your eyes they sing a sad sad song/Of how you lived so fast and died so young/So don't push me 'cause I'm close to the edge/I'm trying not to lose my head/It's like a jungle sometimes it makes me wonder/How I keep from going under'/.*

Principal rapper Melly Mel vomits the lyrics like he just can't wait to get their foul taste out of his throat. *The Message* is seven minutes of broken glass and nightmare funk. Only this nightmare is real. Interestingly enough, it is by far Flash's biggest hit, having even broken into the English Top Ten.

Although at first it seemed a fad, rap is beginning to make strong inroads into mainstream pop in the USA and Britain. Almost every self-respecting mob of funkateers, black or white, has a rap in its rep. There are English rappers (Funkapolitan) and even French rappers (Le Trio Noir). The next English record to hit big in the Australian charts will be *Young Guns*, an aggressive rap by the two-piece Wham!

In addition, rap:

- spurred James Brown, one of its spiritual antecedents, into recording one of the best tracks of his entire career, *Rapp Payback*.
- brought Kid Creole and the Coconuts to the public's attention via *Me No Pop 1*.
- currently has two Top Ten hits in Britain, *The Message* and *Young Guns*.
- gave Blondie the last really big hit of their career, *Rapture*.
- even appears on our TV screens in the form of ads for Sportsgirl and *Cie* perfume *('It's the French scent/That keeps you confident')*.

This last one is actually the most revealing of all. Although rap won't be showing up too often in our charts, its influence will be widespread. No hard-core punks ever showed up in Australia's Top 40, yet observe how influential the images and ideas of punk have been in our media-dominated culture. Music, art and fashion are just some of the areas to be affected.

Like psychedelia in the 60s, like glam and punk in the 70s, the urban subculture of the Bronx street kids is going to infiltrate our mass culture with a whole new range of potentially subversive signs and symbols, meanings and myths.

"The rap and breaking phenomenon is just starting to have an effect on the official culture in New York and elsewhere, and I think that this will be clear in the next couple of years, this influence as the New York image, music, gesture. I think the work should be looked on as a highly sophisticated art form which is the image of New York. It's definitely the soul of the underground scene at the moment."

— Diego Cortez, *Flash Art Magazine*, 1982.

"In the future I just hope all my groups keep piping. See George Clinton took the music of Sly Stone and James Brown and made a whole funk empire out of it. That's what I'm trying to do with rap."

— Afrika Bambaataa, *Village Voice*, 1982.

"And they say rap's gonna die. Out of this world. No way. I say to myself, God, this is something WE created."

— Grandmaster Flash, *NME*, 1981.

'I'm Count Coolout, the cool ghoul MC
As I roll with the punches I rock to the beat
People thought I'd lose my rock and get lost in my rhyme
But I was born to get it on till the end of time
I'm a man who leads a life of danger
To everything I meet I stay a stranger
Whether near or far
Me and my double R
Will keep rockin' parties on until tomorrow.

CREDITS:
Raps quoted from Grandmaster Flash & the Furious Five, the Treacherous Three, the Disco Four, Count Coolout, Doctor Ice and Trouble Funk.

DISCOGRAPHY:

- ***Superrappin'* — Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five (Enjoy Import)**
- ***Planet Rock* — Afrika Bambaataa and the Soul Sonic Force (Tommy Boy Import)**
- **Nearly every other rap track worth owning is to be found on the Sugar Hill compilation *Rapped Uptight* including *The Message*.**
- ***Shoot The Pump* — J. Walter Negro and the Loose Jointz (Zoo York Import)**
- ***How We Gonna Make The Black Nation Rise?* — Brother D and the Collective Effort (Clappers International)**

MUSO'S WORLD

A new, behind-the-scenes series on people and equipment.

ON THE ROAD

By
PHIL STAFFORD

ROADSTER — An open automobile having a single seat for two or three people, and a rumble seat or luggage compartment in the back.

THERE ARE WHITE LINES and white lines — some you find painted on road surfaces, signifying which side to travel on to obtain best results, i.e. to avoid unnecessary metal-to-metal conflict and/or to reach your destination. Others you find up your nose to aid/abet/accelerate both of these objectives. Ask any roadie who's done a 30-hour haul from Sydney to Brisbane, or worse still, Adelaide to Perth. In fact, ask any truckie. Speed may not be the essence of endeavour, but it sure helps you stay awake for its execution. (And yeah, some say it kills, too — but asleep at the wheel's close enough to the Big Sleep.)

There's fast food and sometimes it's better to *fast*, while we're on the subject of motion. And when you're a band on the road with a strict budget riding shotgun, choice runs a poor second to necessity. Just as the truck's axle spins with the aid of grease, so too the diet of the touring rock'n'roll band. Just how many five-star restaurants have parking space for six-ton pantechs anyway? How many roadies have Diner's Club cards? What's the most nutritious part of a McDonald's hamburger? (Answer: the air between the buns.) So, drive like the wind, live on air — simple.

Not so simple the logistics of keeping a band on the road. Ask **Chris Bastic**, who's tour-managed everyone from Chisel and the Angels to the Divinyls and Mondo Rock. Does sound like an easy job though — just line up the itinerary, the accommodation, hire the road crew, the production (P.A., lights, staging etc.) — any phone jockey could do it, right? Wrong.

"It should be a prerequisite for a manager to have a working mechanical knowledge of P.A. systems as well as the standard economic and diplomatic skills for dealing with the straight side of the business — the pub owners, the moteliers, the hire companies — not only should you be responsible for hiring crews and organising tours, but you must have the necessary working skills to be able to spot mechanical problems as well. . .

"And when you're constantly dealing with money, people'll try and shaft you — it's up to you to try and shaft *them* as well, by getting more people into the gigs."

As the showbiz cliche goes, it's bums on seats that count, and what pays the bills for most touring bands is that head-count at the door. Sure, a band may be assured a 'guarantee' (a set minimum performance fee), but that barely pays the wages. It's the return from a percentage of the door-charge that makes the difference as to whether the band dines out on roadhouse food or dines in on toast and cereal.

I mean, consider an average weekly expense bill for a five-piece band with its average eight-person entourage (soundman, foldback engineer, tour manager, lighting engineer, stage roadie plus two or three 'luggers'), and you're talking six to seven grand — and that's a pretty modest estimate. *(See table.)*

Talk to **Michael Roberts**, who's managed Jo Jo Zep for the last five years, and consider his current predicament: looking after a party of 18 on the road requires economic juggling on an immense scale.

"It comes down to the sort of deals you can strike, and that's where a tour manager can capitalise on his business sense, which has to be built up over time.

"You have to establish an ongoing relationship with hire companies, accommodation people. . . you must develop a reputation as a reliable payer, and to do that, the money has to be coming in — regularly."

It's not been easy in the past to establish the sort of financial footing that the straight business world expects *and* demands of such a high-risk undertaking as keeping a band on the road. People like Michael Roberts and Chris Bastic have had to chip away at the prejudices that invariably attend the rock'n'roll industry much in the way that sculptors acquire credibility as artists — *slowly*. And they've done it by combining an intuitively perceptive approach to economics with a diplomat's skill in public relations — a sense of humour tends to help as well.

And when, like Michael Roberts, you're juggling close on $16,000 in road costs per *week*, it gets precarious.

It makes it easier when you've got a record charting, which guarantees a certain amount of punter interest — at least you're pulling that elusive sector of the public who gauge their motivation for attending a gig on more than a live reputation.

But what of those bands who've been slogging it for years on the basis of past glories? How do you adjust to the long-term road grind when your last big hit is a mere memory left wandering somewhere in the early morning highway fog? Does anyone remember the **Ted Mulry Gang**? Are they still alive? I thought I'd investigate, just to prove there is road life after chart death.

By way of negating the notion that it's useless staying on the road without current *product*, I tracked down the ageless Ted Mulry and discovered it's still possible to make a living, however meagre, peddling rock'n'roll town to town — and he's been doing it for the last ten years.

ON THE ROAD — on tour, as a theatrical company; travelling, especially as a salesman; wandering, as a vagabond.

ALL OF THE above may well apply to TMG, because above all, the band is a business. Sure, they're about as current as last year's bread, but being the staple that it is, bread never loses its value — meaning, economics are the prime ingredient.

So with TMG, it's a tight operation: four-piece band, three-man crew, modest production — and it pays. . . as Michael Roberts pointed out, you *can* live off a reputation — delivering the goods (consistently) is what counts in the long haul.

The band travels together in a mini-bus behind the equipment truck, so avoiding the expense of hire cars. Besides, with two vehicles on the road, the likelihood of mishap (breakdowns, accidents etc.) depreciates.

TMG haven't recorded in three years, but it hasn't affected their pulling power. Travelling salesmen they may be, but who needs *new* wares? Better to wander as vagabonds and deliver the tried and proven goods.

Though they hardly tour on the scale they once did, TMG keep up a consistent schedule which takes them points north to Darwin and west to Perth. Where once it was Cordon Bleu and chartered planes, it's now back to bitumen and roadside cafes

And just what is the pinnacle of haute cuisine for Ted and the boys en route?

"You really can't go past Golden Fleece roadhouses," says Ted, and after ten years he'd have tried 'em all

"I mean, we used to live on grease and beer in days past, but we've realised the value of looking after yourself on the road

"To be able to keep going you've gotta eat decent food — and you can usually find it at the bigger roadhouses

ROADHOUSE — an inn, restaurant or nightclub located on a road outside a city.

Early TMG: "Road food made us what we are today!"

THOUGH THERE'D be few roadhouses to qualify for the above definition, they've improved quite a deal since Sherbet were at their touring peak. Bass player **Tony Mitchell** recounted some pretty horrific tales of fleapits and food poisoning that had me wondering why he's still in the business.

"You get to know which places to avoid after a few years of constant touring," says Tony. After twelve years on the road with Sherbet and its latter day incarnations, Highway and The Sherbs, he'd have a fair idea.

The band had an effectively novel method of paying out on places where they'd copped a raw deal — particularly if the food was suss.

We had this tour manager who was big on reptiles, kept snakes and stuff — he used to go out catching them Harry Butler-style up in Queensland

Anyway, we were at this place, and they served up the food which was like really horrible, cold and stodgy. A couple of us were feeling really queasy so the tour manager decided to give this place a bit of a serve

"So he whips out this huge cane toad he had in his bag, and just sorta bit its head off in front of the staff Caused a bit of a stir — we didn't drop in *there* again

Talk about out-grossing Ozzy Osbourne — he only does it with doves and bats. . .

Tony recounted another instance of gastric violence, this time at the hands of some particularly vicious pies the band had scored somewhere in Queensland. It was pretty severe — drummer Alan Sandow was literally laid out, and there was no way he could do the gig that night.

"We decided we had to do the gig anyway we could," recalls Tony. "So we went out on stage and asked if there were any drummers in the audience, and this 15-year-old guy got up and I said 'Right, get on the kit, let's go!'

"I was counting him in on each song — it was like 1-2-3-4, 'See ya at the end'. But we got through it somehow."

The show must go on. . . like the time guitarist Clive Shakespeare failed to materialise at a Hordern show — apparently, he couldn't get a park.

"We went on with Daryl (Braithwaite) playing guitar — he just kept cranking out the most horrendous guitar solos we'd ever heard, but we still managed to get through that one as well

"We rang up Clive after the show to find out why he didn't show up, and he actually said he couldn't find a parking spot, so he went home!"

There's some hair-raising tales to be told about tour accommodation as well, like the place in Cairns where it's highly advisable to wear thongs in the shower — seems the same digs set aside for bands are the fave haunt of the local derros as well, who delight in voiding their ravaged lungs in the shower recesses. But by and large, the hotels and motels catering for bands on the road have got their act together. Comfortable (if spartan) conditions abide in most places, with some bordering on the near-palatial — like the Forest Lodge in Brisbane, with its leafy, peaceful bush setting, pool and self-contained, relatively spacious rooms.

Elsewhere in Queensland, conditions can be less than ideal. Tony Mitchell takes up the thread of dread:

"We stayed in this place once that was almost like a P.O.W. camp," he says, deadly serious.

"It was in Charters Towers, a near ghost town in western Queensland. It seemed as though it'd been a mining boom town at one stage, but when we stayed there, we hardly saw anybody.

"We arrived at this motel, and I think they were expecting a chamber orchestra or something — definitely not a rock'n'roll band.

"It was like no beer allowed, no guests, no noise — nothing. Anyway, we had a bit of a rage, and next morning all the local geriatrics were lined up outside ready to fight us — pretty ridiculous situation.

"We couldn't wait to get out of the place."

Behind all the melodrama and mirth of life on the road is the inescapable reality of making it pay. And a large part of meeting the fiercest of budgets is shopping around for the best deals in equipment, personnel and facilities — which comes down largely to a manager's skill as an economist.

The approach to cost-cutting takes several forms. Most bands hire P.A. systems and lights for extensive tours, and the rates vary alarmingly, again depending on what sort of

Tony Mitchell

deal can be struck on the basis of track records. Many bands build up solid business relationships over time with particular hire companies, and can make use of considerable bargaining power when the size and duration of a tour means big business to those companies. And if you're touring regularly, business can ony get better.

Another cost factor to consider is equipment durability, and this can be facilitated by the use of elaborate road cases to house a band's personal stage equipment. Again, economic sense dictates that slightly greater initial expense on the best quality road cases will ensure longevity of life for the equipment they contain.

Many bands have their road cases custom-built to specifications, and there are an increasing number of individuals and companies specialising in this end.

More insurance companies are becoming involved in the music industry, but as would be expected in such a high-risk business as road touring, premiums are prohibitive, though a necessary expenditure. Again, it comes down to shopping around for the best deal.

ROAD — an open way, generally public, for the passage of vehicles, persons and animals; a course or path.

NOT UNTRUE FOR rock'n'roll — generally public, sees plenty vehicles (sometimes in the form of lethal projectiles, whether on the Opera House steps or the Nullarbor Plain), is populated by many persons and/or animals — witness famous roadies' nicknames like 'Pig', 'Bear', or jus' plain ol' *Animal*. . . A course or path? Depends how you travel.

And for most rock'n'roll bands, that's spelt *t-t-r-u-c-k*. They're big, they're dangerous, and they're *expensive*. To hire, like a grand-a-week expensive, if it's to put a destructive bill to constructive work. Most bands have learnt through bitter (and tragic) experience that it pays to have one that's mechanically sound, preferably driven by someone theoretically sound under conditions that are perpetually unpredictable. Most bands have also learnt dearly that hiring, though dearer, is *safer*.

And with hiring, the advantages are more real than material: insurance is usually of the non-dodgy variety, while the mechanical state of the vehicle often ensures its progression beyond the first freeway exit. A good deal of the trucking companies have diesel fleets these days as well, helping to allay the ever-present roadie's fear of self-immolation in the line of driving duty. Well, at least the stuff don't burn like petrol.

But wherever the fire starts, it's a big worry for any band — whether it's self or equipment first, flames mean history.

No-one likes to blow out a gig. . .

ROADWORK — outdoor long distance running as a form of physical exercise or conditioning.

What It Costs

A typical, one-or-two charting records, 4-5 piece Name Band's On-Road Expenses For A Week:

Four roadies (front-of-house sound, foldback sound, lights, and stage) at $300 per week	1200.00
Tour Manager (and general business hand)	300.00
Luggers and Riggers (general hands) — usually two at $150 per week	300.00
P.A. system (minimum double four-way)	1250.00
Lights	500.00
Accommodation	800.00
Truck	1000.00
Hire Cars	500.00
Float (Expenses)	500.00
TOTAL:	$6350.00

And that's before Band Wages!

The Ultimate On-The-Road Diary

Keeping track of earnings, expenses and where-the-hell-will-we-be-next-Tuesday-fortnight is a headache for any artist, manager or agent — and especially if you're moving about a lot and collecting a briefcase full of vital scraps of paper. But an enterprising couple in Sydney have come up with a special Show Business Diary which they reckon "will get you organised for less than the cost of a missed booking".

It opens out to display a month at a time each day has corresponding columns for Venue, Contact, Number, Details, Phone Numbers, Times, Contract (split cannily into Guarantee and Percentage), and 'Comments'. There's a Forward Planner, Cash Summary section, extensive space for vital names and numbers, and even a colour coded map of world time zones to help you through that O.S. record deal!

The large format diary comes with a bonus pocket sized appointments diary the whole package is $32.50 including postage and handling from **Bookmate, P.O. Box 202, Bondi, NSW 2026, phone (02) 389 2208**. Several agencies have apparently been snapping them up by the handful. . .

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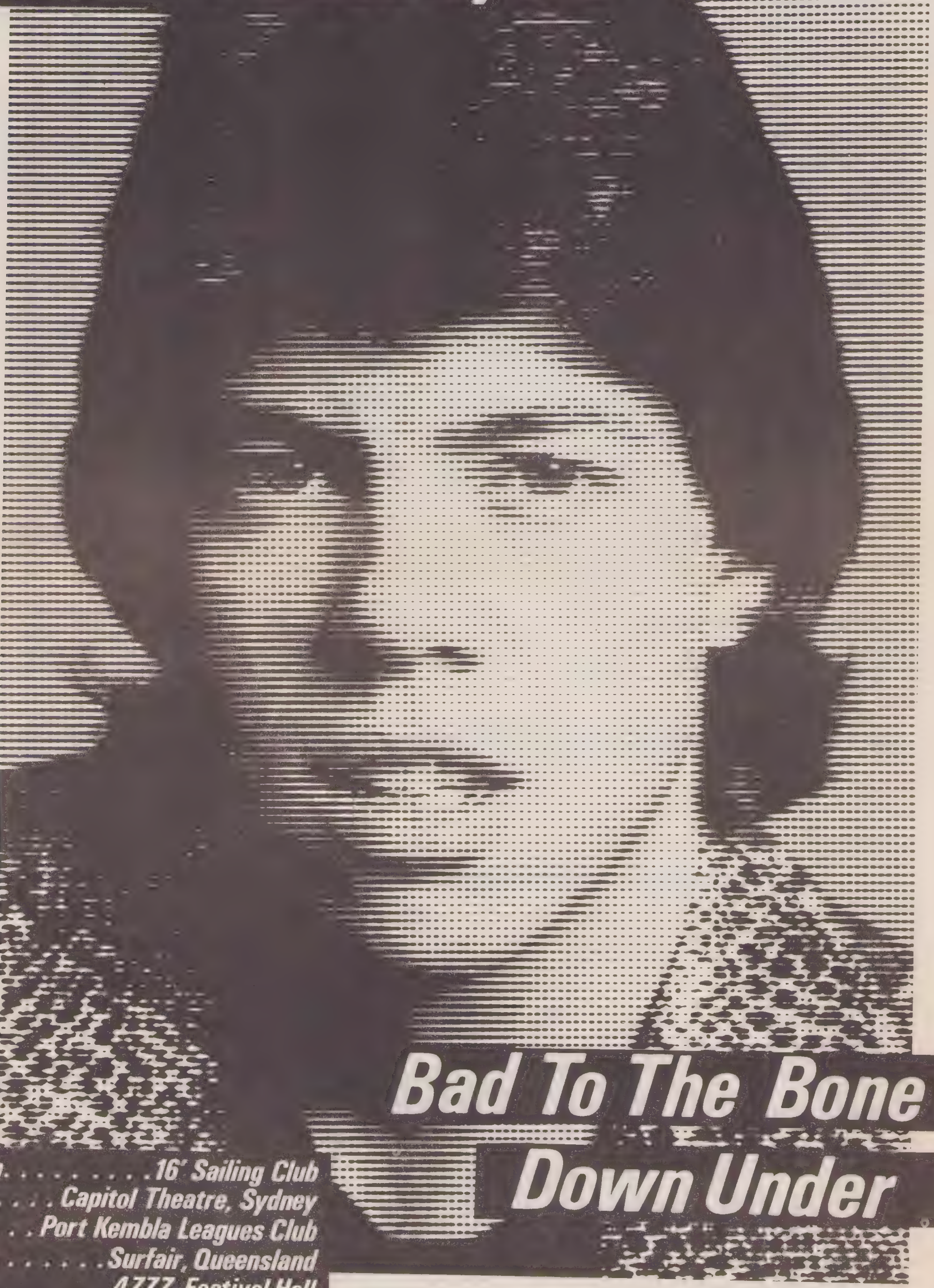

Bad To The Bone Down Under

Thur 20 Jan	16' Sailing Club
Fri 21	Capitol Theatre, Sydney
Sun 23	Port Kembla Leagues Club
Fri 28	Surfair, Queensland
Sat 29	4ZZZ Festival Hall
Sun 30	Bombay Rock, Melbourne
Fri 4 Feb	Palais Theatre, Melbourne
Mon 7	Traralgon Astrodome
Fri 11	Thebarton Town Hall, Adelaide

catalogue no. ST17076

EMI

Some guys get weary and retire to a bikini store,

THE GIRL AT the hotel reception was 'friendly' in the way people are whose only transactions with the world have been made in terms of hard US currency. Now that Americans are having to learn words like 'inflation' and 'unemployment', their former smug reliance on money as the only index to character or motivation has been eroded into a vindictive desperation.

"Before I give you your key sir, how will you be paying for your incidentals?

As if there's anything worth ripping off in a dump like *this*.

Tom Petty's years in LA have left him (as far as I can tell) largely free of the local diseases of latent hostility and instinctive greed. But as he admits himself, he's preoccupied with his work, lives a life of seclusion with his family, and even on the road with the Heartbreakers he prefers to cut himself off from well-wishers and even his record company. Peace at any price?

"In LA, everything closes pretty much at two o'clock — if you had any place to go in the first place. You just go over to people's houses 'cos there ain't much else to do, really. You can go to a movie, go to clubs three times and then you've seen that."

Doesn't living here make you feel prematurely old?

"Not really, 'cos where I grew up it was kinda the same way. We just had to make whatever scene was gonna go on, so. . .I stay so busy I don't even notice this town. I was talkin' to somebody about it the other night, I don't even hardly go downtown or go out 'cos I've always got something I'm doing.

"I see everybody to do work, but if I didn't have a job where I did that I think it would be a pretty weird place to live."

'I'm just a working man,' he sings in a song called *Finding Out* from his new album, entitled *Long After Dark*. It's a line which invites instinctive howls of derision at the rich LA rock star still pretending to be in touch with the street, but Petty has adjusted to American stardom as gracefully as anybody could. He doesn't *have* to work, but he toured the States and Canada for four months last year and he still gets an album out once a year, which is just as often as most groups at a far less elevated level.

It's to his credit that he's still *worth* writing about. It's his honesty that's kept his head above water — Petty has never pretended to be anything other than a singer with a rock'n'roll band; he doesn't think he's an "artist", and he took up the challenge by coming to Europe last month.

"Just go for it, take them all on," I urged him as we completed a second interview on the phone a couple of weeks ago. "Yeah, I will," his voice crackled back down the line. "I mean, I don't have any other choice. We only do what we do but I know we do it well. I'm pretty excited about it really."

He chuckled. "I think it's funny, we laugh among ourselves because we're the only band left that really plays guitars."

The last rock'n'roller?

"Well, I think that may be rather a melodramatic way of putting it."

After cutting a load of songs, and trying some out in assorted different ways, Petty finally made *Long After Dark* a straight rock'n'roll record. The nearest thing to a ballad is the wistful closing track *A Wasted Life*, but it's been cut live and sung straight. There are no money-spinning duets with Stevie Nicks this time, despite Petty's phenomenally successful collaboration with the fey songstress on *Insider* and the hit single *Stop Draggin' My Heart Around*, in 1981.

"I don't really wanna do that again, it would be the obvious easy thing to do," said Petty. "It was such a big success it was ridiculous, y'know, we're still laughing about it. But I don't really see our future as teamin' up with Stevie."

The most striking thing about *Dark* is the sheer rawness of it, especially after the time spent in the making. Nowhere in the ten songs included is there much hint of conscious slickness, though the sound of the record is good and powerful. The songs are typically Petty — strong choruses, some very Byrdy harmonies, plenty of guitars crashing and flying around. Especially recommended are the anthemic *Deliver Me*, and *Change Of Heart*.

The one mistake is *Between Two Worlds*, the longest song included and one which veers unpleasantly close to blundering heavy metal. But overall, it's not unlike a charged-up version of Petty's second album *You're Gonna Get It*, a suggestion Petty agrees with.

Won't people dismiss it as Tom Petty just going back to his old rock'n'roll songs? They might, Petty concedes, but "I think the songs are actually better than the old ones."

The sheer *voltage* of the performances is likely to knock a few people back on their heels. Maybe it's something to do with the addition of new bassist Howard Epstein, a man whose past includes stints with Del Shannon (for whom Petty produced an album last year), and John Hiatt.

Original bassist Ron Blair has now abandoned the music biz altogether. "After the last tour, he just said 'Look'," said Petty.

"We'd been kinda sensing for a long time that he wasn't too interested, he was only showin' up for half an album, but it was sad to see him go after six years.

"You always hear that these things are amiable, but actually it was; nobody even raised their voices. He said 'I don't wanna do it', so he took all his money and bought a bikini store in LA. So now he just sits and watches teenage girls trying on bikinis all day, which I guess is one way of settling down."

(Pic: Linda Nolte)

The single is *You Got Lucky*, where Petty sings *'You got lucky, babe, when you found me'*. . .it sounds very *arrogant*. . . "Yeah," smirked Tom, "that was the most obnoxious song I ever wrote." You don't *believe* it, surely? "No I don't, but it made me laugh."

Of course, putting out singles often means that the artiste has to make a video to go with them. Petty hates videos with a venomous vengeance.

"If I see one more video, I'm gonna scream. I can't even tell who the bands are — is this guy the bass player? Is he an actor? Is the the French chef? I'm not impressed by acting. I think it's boring.

"We've never been an image- or fashion-conscious buncha guys anyway. We did some videos last year and it was just the most boring thing *ever*."

As an alternative, the Heartbreakers are working on a documentary film about their career, directed by LA boy wonder Cameron Crowe *(almost* the only journalist Neil Young ever talks to).

And speaking of ol' Neil, I threw a quote at Tom from the Canuck. Musing over his own determination to keep his music changing, Young observed that all his old contemporaries had settled for rehashing the sound that made them popular originally, failing to appreciate that they'd first made the grade by doing something different. Whaddya think about that, Tom?

"I think my last album was pretty much of a change," said Petty. "I think with this album we've kinda gone back to an older style. But then again I don't have any aspirations to — what's it called? — Art. It's really a rock album.

"But I agree with Neil, you have to keep on doing something a bit different. Like Crosby, Stills and Nash are still doing the same old stuff. . ."

Petty — though he's heard Young's imminent album which is decorated with vocoder and drum machine (as previewed in his recent British shows), and finds it "pretty strange" — had been listening to the likes of Soft Cell and the Human League back in LA when I spoke to him, and had enjoyed *Tainted Love* and *Don't You Want Me*.

"I like the drum machine stuff," he said. "A lotta people are really turned off to it, but I got one a while ago and I play with it all the time." (Tom used one to make his own demos, playing everything else himself).

"There's an awful lot you can do, and one thing drum machines are doing is improving the rhythm of all these bands. They've really got a rhythm consciousness now that they didn't use to have."

He agreed that the likes of Asia (cement-heads from the dawn of time) were doing nobody any favours, except, of course, their bank managers.

"There was an article in the paper about them the other day, saying 'After all that's happened, is this what the kids really want?' I guess they do. The only thing you can do is just let 'em run their course."

and some guys just keep working on, Long After Dark. . .

TOM PETTY doesn't want no 'art' tag, doesn't want no melodrama, can dig drum machines but would rather play guitar, and it all makes sense to ADAM SWEETING.

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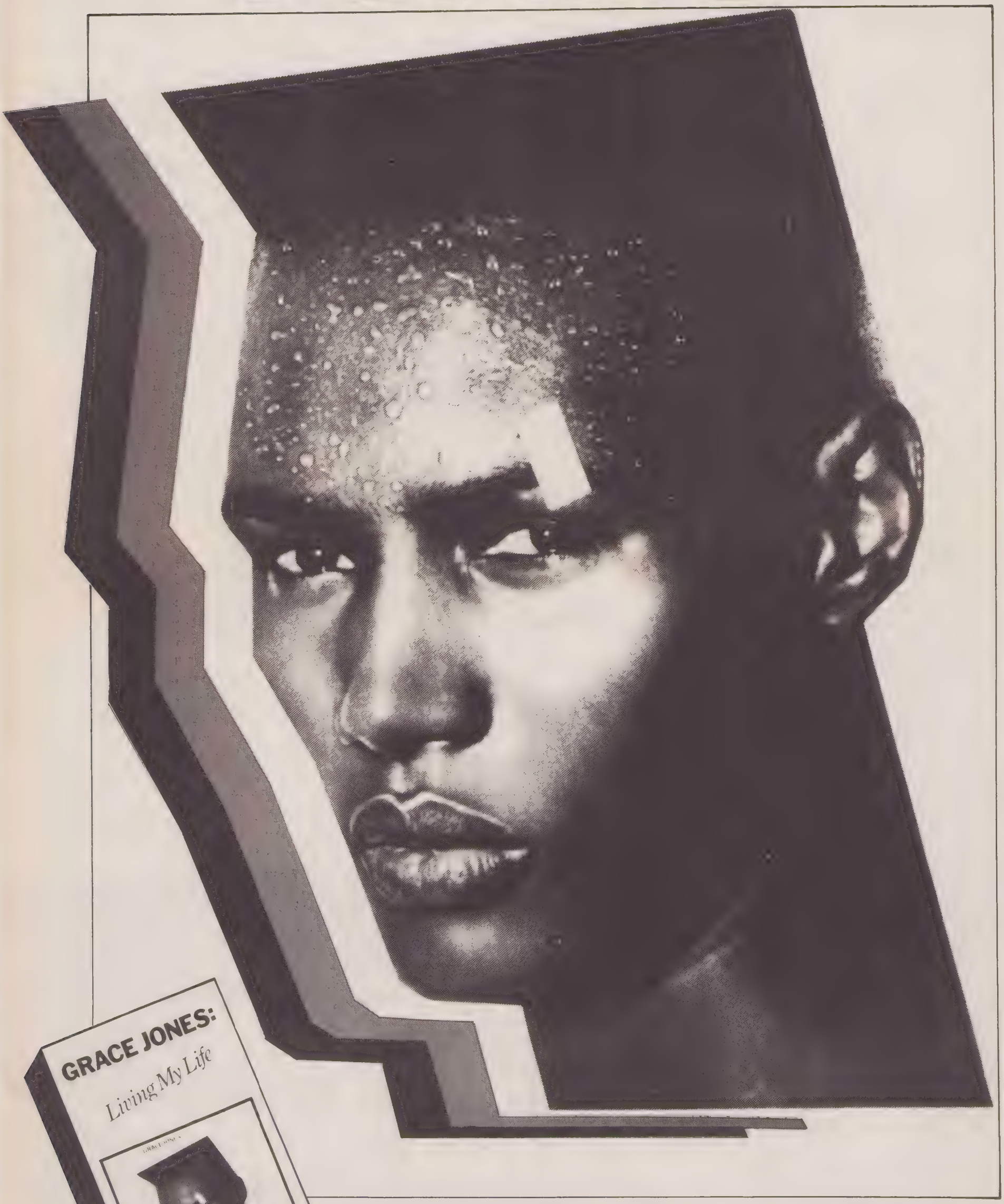
GRACE JONES



LIVING MY LIFE

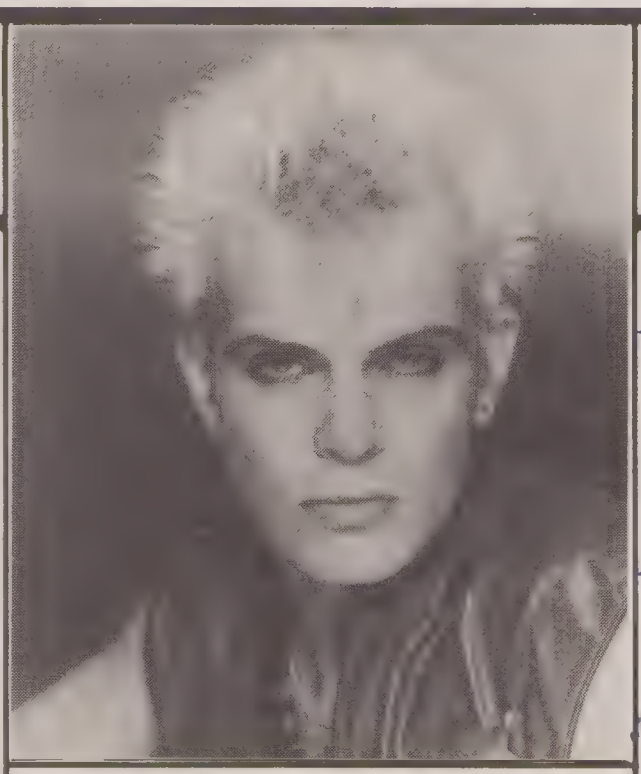
20th anniversary
ISLAND

THE NEW RECORD & TAPE

CHARTZ

OZ 45s

1	1	1	6	**PASS THE DUTCHIE** ..... Musical Youth
2	7	2	3	**DO YOU REALLY WANT TO HURT ME** ..... Culture Club
3	4	3	10	**SOLID ROCK** ..... Goanna
4	5	4	5	**MANEATER** ..... Daryl Hall & John Oates
5	3	3	11	**ROCK THE CASBAH** ..... Clash
6	2	1	12	**COME ON EILEEN**... Dexy's Midnight Runners
7	10	7	3	**DR HECKYLL AND MR JIVE** ..... Men At Work
8	9	8	7	**THIS GUY'S IN LOVE (With You)** .... The Reels
9	8	8	5	**HEY LITTLE GIRL** ..... Icehouse
10	6	5	5	**THE GIRL IS MINE** ..... Michael Jackson & Paul McCartney
11	11	11	5	**IT'S RAINING AGAIN** ..... Supertramp
12	12	12	6	**BACK ON THE CHAIN GANG** .. The Pretenders
13	13	5	9	**JACK AND DIANE** ..... John Cougar
14	15	14	3	**DON'T CHANGE** ..... INXS
15	21	15	8	•**I'M SO EXCITED** ..... Pointer Sisters
16	14	9	9	**IT STARTED WITH A KISS** ..... Hot Chocolate
17	23	17	8	•**HOT IN THE CITY** ..... Billy Idol
18	37	18	2	**HEARTBREAKER** ..... Dionne Warwick
19	29	19	3	•**THE CLAPPING SONG** ..... Belle Stars
20	20	20	3	**STAND UP** ..... The Angels
21	32	21	2	•**WHEN YOU WERE SWEET SIXTEEN** The Fureys
22	22	1	17	**EYE OF THE TIGER** ..... Survivor
23	18	14	7	**DO YOU WANNA TOUCH ME?** ..... Joan Jett & The Blackhearts
24	17	2	14	**SHY BOY** ..... Bananarama
25	16	13	7	**WINNERS** ..... Moving Pictures
26	26	26	3	**US FORCES** ..... Midnight Oil
27	—	27	1	•**WE CAN'T BE BEATEN** ..... Rose Tattoo
28	19	12	10	**TAXI MARY** ..... Jo Jo Zep
29	27	5	14	**YOU SHOULD HEAR HOW SHE TALKS ABOUT YOU** ..... Melissa Manchester
30	—	30	1	•**I EAT CANNIBALS** ..... Toto Coelo
31	25	16	9	**TRUE LOVE** ..... Billy Field
32	40	32	2	•**HEARTLIGHT** ..... Neil Diamond
33	—	33	1	•**LOVE MY WAY** ..... Psychedelic Furs
34	—	34	2	•**ALL OF MY HEART** ..... ABC
35	—	35	1	•**MIRROR MAN** ..... The Human League
36	34	34	2	**ST LOUIS** ..... Little River Band
37	36	31	6	**FORGET ME NOTS** ..... Patrice Rushen
38	—	38	1	**THE RIVER** ..... King Trigger
39	30	20	9	**HEART ATTACK** ..... Olivia Newton-John
40	24	5	13	**I KNOW THERE'S SOMETHING GOING ON** ..... Frida



Billy Idol — getting hotter (Pic: Paul Cox/LFI)

NEW RELEASE SAMPLER

SINGLES

JACKIE WILSON SAID	Dexys Midnight Runners
SCIENCE FICTION	Divinyls
WAITING FOR A TRAIN	Flash in the Pan
THE MESSAGE	Grandmaster Flash
PAYLOAD	Hunters & Collectors
WALK ON BY	Jo Jo Zep
NIPPLE TO THE BOTTLE	Grace Jones
LOVE MACHINE	North 2 Alaskans
BLIND LEAD THE BLIND	Pel Mel
SOMEONE, SOMEWHERE	Simple Minds
INTIMACY	Linn Van Hecke
HOOKED ON HOOKS	Skyhooks

MINI ALBUMS

SING SONGS	The Church
DECKCHAIRS OVERBOARD	Deckchairs Overboard
DEE MINOR & THE DISCHORDS	Dee Minor & The Dischords
THE WAITING ROOM	Do Re Mi

ALBUMS

IT IS WHAT IT IS	Hitmen
OUT OF REASON	Pel Mel
LONG AFTER DARK	Tom Petty & the Heartbreakers
ALL SPORTS	Sports
WAXWORKS	XTC

OZ LPs

1	1	1	12	**LOVE OVER GOLD** ..... Dire Straits
2	9	2	3	**SPIRIT OF PLACE** ..... Goanna
3	2	2	6	**FAMOUS LAST WORDS** ..... Supertramp
4	3	3	3	**10,9,8,7,6,5,4,3,2,1** ..... Midnight Oil
5	5	5	8	**HOTTEST HITS** ..... Hot Chocolate
6	8	4	9	**THE NYLON CURTAIN** ..... Billy Joel
7	4	3	7	**H20** ..... Daryl Hall & John Oates
8	12	8	6	**HEARTLIGHT** ..... Neil Diamond
9	6	1	14	**PRIMITIVE MAN** ..... Icehouse
10	10	10	3	**CODA** ..... Led Zeppelin
11	13	11	3	**THE JOHN LENNON COLLECTION** ..... John Lennon
12	7	4	9	**SHABOOH SHOOBAH** ..... INXS
13	15	13	3	**ENZ OF AN ERA** ..... Split Enz
14	16	1	26	**AVALON** ..... Roxy Music
15	14	11	6	**GREATEST HITS Vol 3** ..... Olivia Newton-John
16	34	16	2	•**HEARTBREAKER** ..... Dionne Warwick
17	18	17	3	**THE NIGHTFLY** ..... Donald Fagen
18	11	2	11	**TOO-RYE-AY** ..... Dexy's Midnight Runners
19	17	14	7	**SCARRED FOR LIFE** ..... Rose Tattoo
20	19	3	17	**NIGHT AND DAY** ..... Joe Jackson
21	20	5	16	**THE LEXICON OF LOVE** ..... ABC
22	—	22	1	•**KISSING TO BE CLEVER** ..... Culture Club
23	22	22	3	**HELLO, I MUST BE GOING** ..... Phil Collins
24	21	21	3	**TRY BIOLOGY** ..... Billy Field
25	23	16	5	**GET NERVOUS** ..... Pat Benatar
26	32	26	2	•**THRILLER** ..... Michael Jackson
27	30	27	3	**WHEN YOU WERE SWEET SIXTEEN** ..... The Fureys
28	24	2	24	**MIRAGE** ..... Fleetwood Mac
29	31	29	2	**GREATEST HITS Vol 2** ..... The Eagles
30	36	28	7	•**JANE FONDA'S WORKOUT RECORD**
31	27	3	13	**THE VERY BEST OF DON McLEAN** Don McLean
32	28	28	9	**COMBAT ROCK** ..... The Clash
33	39	33	3	**BAD REPUTATION** Joan Jett & The Blackhearts
34	26	18	6	**GET CLOSER** ..... Linda Ronstadt
35	—	35	1	•**GREATEST HITS Vol 2** .. The Little River Band
36	—	36	1	•**BEAUTIFUL** ..... The Reels
37	25	19	17	**AMERICAN FOOL** ..... John Cougar
38	—	38	1	**LIVING MY LIFE** ..... Grace Jones
39	—	19	10	**REVERIES 2** ..... Richard Clayderman
40	—	40	1	**WHAT A RUDE ALBUM** ..... Doug Mulray & Ken Sterling

Compiled by SCANES MUSIC RESEARCH

UK 45S

1	5	•**BEAT SURRENDER** ..... The Jam
2	2	**YOUNG GUNS (GO FOR IT)** . Wham!
3	1	**MIRROR MAN** ..... Human League
4	12	•**TIME** ..... Culture Club
5	10	•**TRULY** ..... Lionel Richie
6	8	**SAVE YOUR LOVE** ..... Renee and Renato
7	4	**LIVING ON THE CEILING** ..... Blancmange
8	9	**WISHING (IF I HAD A PHOTOGRAPH OF YOU)** ..... A Flock of Seagulls
9	3	**I DON'T WANNA DANCE** Eddy Grant
10	17	•**HYMN** ..... Ultravox
11	14	**THE OTHER SIDE OF LOVE** .. Yazoo
12	13	**RIO** ..... Duran Duran
13	19	•**OUR HOUSE** ..... Madness
14	6	**HEARTBREAKER** .. Dionne Warwick
15	7	**(SEXUAL) HEALING** ... Marvin Gaye
16	15	**YOUTH OF TODAY** .. Musical Youth
17	22	•**BEST YEARS OF OUR LIFE** ..... Modern Romance
18	11	**MAD WORLD** ..... Tears For Fears
19	27	•**FRIENDS** ..... Shalamar
20	—	•**LET'S GET THIS STRAIGHT** ..... Dexys Midnight Runners
21	—	•**BUFFALO GALS** .. Malcolm McLaren and the Worlds Famous ..... Supreme Team
22	—	•**WHERE THE HEART IS** ... Soft Cell
23	—	•**I FEEL LOVE** ..... Donna Summer
24	16	**STATE OF INDEPENDENCE** ..... Donna Summer
25	25	**TALK TALK** ..... Talk Talk
26	—	**PEACE ON EARTH/LITTLE DRUMMER BOY** ... David Bowie and ..... Bing Crosby
27	24	**NIGHTPORTER** ..... Japan
28	30	**MELT** ... Siouxsie and the Banshees
29	21	**CRY BOY CRY** ..... Blue Zoo
30	—	**HERE I GO AGAIN** ..... Whitesnake

UK LPS

1	3	**THE SINGLES, THE FIRST TEN YEARS** ..... Abba
2	5	**MIDNIGHT LOVE** ..... Marvin Gaye
3	2	**HEARTBREAKER** Dionne Warwick
4	21	•**CODA** ..... Led Zeppelin
5	1	**HELLO, I MUST BE GOING** ..... Phil Collins
6	4	**SINGLES — 45's AND UNDER** ..... Squeeze
7	11	**THE JOHN LENNON COLLECTION** ..... John Lennon
8	14	•**SAINTS AN' SINNERS** .. Whitesnake
9	17	•**I WANNA DO IT WITH YOU** .. Barry Manilow
10	15	•**PEARLS II** .. Elkie Brooks
11	20	•**RIO** ..... Duran Duran
12	9	**FROM THE MAKERS OF...** .. Status Quo
13	13	**THE KIDS FROM FAME** ..... Various Artists
14	8	**FAMOUS LAST WORDS** Supertramp
15	6	**LIVING MY LIFE** ..... Grace Jones
16	12	**LOVE OVER GOLD** ..... Dire Straits
17	7	**A KISS IN THE DREAM HOUSE** ..... Siouxsie and the Banshees
18	19	**TALK OF THE DEVIL** Ozzy Osbourne
19	—	•**LIONEL RICHIE** ..... Lionel Richie
20	18	**KISSING TO BE CLEVER** ..... Culture Club
21	24	**HAPPY FAMILIES** ..... Blancmange
22	10	**THE RISE AND FALL** ..... Madness
23	30	•**20 GREATEST LOVE SONGS** ..... Nat King Cole
24	26	**QUARTET** ... Ultravox
25	—	•**KILLER ON THE RAMPAGE** ..... Eddy Grant
26	22	**REFLECTIONS** Various Artists
27	23	**THE NIGHTFLY** ..... Donald Fagen
28	—	**INVITATIONS** ..... Shakatak
29	16	**THE KIDS FROM FAME AGAIN** Various Artists
30	—	**WILD THINGS RUN FAST** Joni Mitchell

US 45S

1	—	**TRULY** ..... Lionel Richie
2	—	**MANEATER** ... Daryl Hall and ..... John Oates
3	—	**MICKEY** .. Toni Basil
4	—	**THE GIRL IS MINE** . Michael Jackson ..... and Paul McCartney
5	5	**STEPPIN' OUT** Joe Jackson
6	6	**DIRTY LAUNDRY** .. Don Henley
7	2	**GLORIA** . Laura Brannigan
8	4	**MUSCLES** . Diana Ross
9	10	**IT'S RAINING AGAIN** . Supertramp
10	12	**(SEXUAL) HEALING** . Marvin Gaye
11	4	**UP WHERE WE BELONG** Joe Cocker ..... and Jennifer Warnes
12	14	**ROCK THIS TOWN** .. Stray Cats
13	—	**THE LOOK OF LOVE** . ABC
14	—	•**DOWN UNDER** ..... Men At Work
15	—	**SHADOWS OF THE NIGHT** ..... Pat Benatar
16	—	**HEART ATTACK** ..... Olivia Newton-John
17	—	**HEARTBREAKER** .. Dionne Warwick
18	—	**NOBODY** ..... Sylvia
19	—	**I.G.Y. (WHAT A BEAUTIFUL WORLD)** ..... Donald Fagen
20	—	**AFRICA** ..... Toto

US LPS

1	2	**LIONEL RICHIE** ..... Lionel Richie
2	3	**BUILT FOR SPEED** ..... Stray Cats
3	1	**BUSINESS AS USUAL** Men At Work
4	4	**FAMOUS LAST WORDS** Supertramp
5	9	**H20** ..... Daryl Hall and John Oates
6	10	**GET NERVOUS** ..... Pat Benatar
7	7	**NIGHT AND DAY** .... Joe Jackson
8	5	**THE NYLON CURTAIN** .... Billy Joel
9	6	**OLIVIA'S GREATEST HITS Vol 2** ..... Olivia Newton-John
10	14	**MIDNIGHT LOVE** ..... Marvin Gaye
11	12	**THE NIGHTFLY** ..... Donald Fagen
12	8	**AMERICAN FOOL** .... John Cougar
13	18	•**LONG AFTER DARK** . Tom Petty and ..... the Heartbreakers
14	11	**EMOTIONS IN MOTION** . Billy Squier
15	15	**FOREVER, FOR ALWAYS, FOR LOVE,** ..... Luther Vandross
16	19	**GREATEST HITS** .... Dan Fogelberg
17	17	**I CAN'T STAND STILL** .. Don Henley
18	16	**HEARTLIGHT** ..... Neil Diamond
19	13	**MIRAGE** ..... Fleetwood Mac
20	20	**COMBAT ROCK** ..... The Clash

SEEN & HEARD

■ RECORDS ■ GIGS ■ MOVIES ■ BOOKS

Australiana, Inc.

GOANNA BAND
Spirit Of Place
(WEA)

The smartest politicians and the richest advertising men use it every day of their lives. It's on car stickers and T-shirts, in shop windows; it endorses cornflakes and sells Holdens. Can't guess what it is? It's Nationalism, dodo! New improved NATIONALISM, the marketing ploy of the moment.

With this commodity, buying those essential luxury items need never twinge your conscience again. Nationalism makes *spending* an expression of solidarity with fellow countrymen, not just a sign of copious consumption. And now, thanks to the wonders of free enterprise, you can get it in rock music. Witness the spectacle of Iva Davies, overcome by the sudden realisation that beneath a facade of sophistication, Australian society is really still struggling to master this Great Southern Land full of endless vistas and unknown spirits. He then hauls together $100,000 worth of electronic equipment to recreate this *amazing* concept in primitivism. . .

At least one thing in Goanna's favour is that they don't indulge in such elaborate illusions. *Spirit Of Place* (catch that title — it's important) is your old-style country rock album, and Goanna are your old-style communal musical unit. What's at issue here however is not Goanna's chosen mode of expression, but the sentiments they express.

For a start, here we have our most renowned historian carving out a veritable niche in history for Goanna by eulogising them in liner notes. I've always been dubious about this sort of generation-straddling, especially since since Bob Hawke agreed to launch No Fixed Address' debut album. And Manning Clark's comments about Goanna ("Their music is about the great human longing. . . the composers and performers deal with all the subjects treated by classical composers. . . they are making their contribution at a popular level to the great debate that is going on in Australia. . .") says more about this cultural neophyte than the worth of the record. (*'Cultural neophyte'? Guilliatt retrieves his Elegantly Unintelligible crown in one fell phrase — Ed.)*

It's hard to reconcile this glowing stamp-of-approval from the Prof. with what appears on the lyric sheet. *Spirit Of Place* is full of vague allusions to endless highways, borderlines, rolling plains and lands of all denominations ('Promised', 'Southern', 'wide', 'brown', etc.). In what way does this contribute to "the great debate"?

What Goanna really represent, far from any true representation of the 'spirit' of Australia, is the same historical romanticism which plagued the Australian film industry for so many years. Unlike the hit single *Solid Rock*, which at least examines a topic of contemporary interest, too much of this album lapses into nostalgic platitudes about man trying to tame nature, runnin' from town to town, facin' the sun, livin' on the razor's edge and grabbin' his destiny with both hands. No doubt these are very heartfelt sentiments, but why pretend they have anything to do with the way 95 per cent of Australians live today? The reality, unfortunately, is a far more prosaic one involving marriage, kids, consumerism and (sub)urban existence. The only time people like this get to see the scorched outback and confront the 'Promised Land' is when they visit the Hoyts Cinema Centre.

Spirit Of Place, rather than contributing to the great debate, is simply a manifestation of the current nationalist craze which is based largely on the illusion that Australia is a nation of bronzed pioneering stock boldly going where no man has gone before. The fact that Goanna have just become the fastest-selling band in Melbourne since Skyhooks only proves there is always a strong market for a slick package like this LP, replete with burning-ochre sleeve and replicated aboriginal art. It's significant that you don't see a band like The Reels sitting at No. 1 on the charts; David Mason's trenchant observations on Australian society don't have quite the same popular acceptance.

Goanna's Shane Howard said in Ram #200 that Australia was "a fat, over-ripe society", and he implied this was largely a result of lethargy. If he really believes that to be the case — and God knows there is enough evidence — he should come to grips with the sort of issues this entails and not allow his work to be promoted as just another Australiana package. As it stands, *Spirit Of Place*, as genuine as its intentions might be, is more a symptom of the disease than a cure.

RICHARD GUILLIATT

CHAD MORGAN
20 Chad Morgan Greats
(EMI)
VARIOUS ARTISTS
Australia — Our Land Our Music
(EMI)

It's a funny thing this new nationalism, this flag waving, this sunburnt sun-loving talk. On one hand it's a natural product of recession insecurities, a rally for some sort of identity in the midst of the very forces which socially and economically deny it. On the other it's a reactionary farce, a mish-mash of distraction and wayward provincialism.

A million miles from the predictable course of Australian nationalism is the heart, soul and songs of Chad Morgan. In some parts of this land this ancient little man in his strange little hat, sporting one of the most grotesquely ENORMOUS sets of teeth known to mankind, is a legend. Chad has spent a lifetime locked into a bush mythology, forming a complex milieu of balladry and bawdy misogyny. He is an archetype that may never really exist, an exaggeration of country ritual and habit, a perverse mixture of the hick show-off and sick showman

In a country whose heritage can be glibly turned into a few token cliches — a la EMI's dastardly *Australia — Our Land Our Music* album — Chad is a misfit, a plaintive anti-nationalist with a bleak and savage vision. His *20 Greats* is a marvellous collection, a truly lucid document of myth and debasement, mateship and paranoia, love, sex, alcohol and the brute, brute heart of a brute country. Both incredibly funny and unspeakably tragic, the world of Chad's songs is a demented reflection of Australia swimming in a sea of its own bathos.

In contrast, the vision to be salvaged from Warren Fahey's *Our Land Our Music* is narrow minded and insipid. A double album purporting to represent "the real music of Australia. . . as diverse and interesting as the country itself!", it reminds me of nothing more or less than an afternoon with Primary School Radio Broadcasts. It's a ghostly album of confusing dogma, a flimsy distillation of disparate national images and short-sighted anthropology. If you enjoyed Bobby Limb's Aussie Concerts at Birkenhead Point, you'll have to buy this record. Otherwise stick to record Manning Clark or Chad Morgan

"Oh the joy, Oh the fun.

Once the Bobba Wobba Wedding had begun!"

TIM McGEE

GRACE JONES
Living My Life
(Festival)

Style is all very well and good, but as last year proved, if there's nothing to back it up with — like a fast tongue or a smart tune — then style becomes revolting, a cheap vehicle that quickly runs out of steam. Grace Jones has style, but during her time in the public eye it's usually been someone else's.

Jean Paul Goude moulded her image, conceived her videos and designed her stage sets. Her most notable musical successes have been cover versions — *Private Life, Nightclubbing* — or a collection of tunes hauled together by the Compass Point Mafia or Sly and Robbie and their cohorts.

All Grace has had to do is act out the part, flesh out the enigmatic, ice-cold character that her LPs and shows portrayed, and carry it off with a certain amount of. . . style. This she has done, usually with great aplomb, and if I was in the position I probably would have given her an Oscar for her troubles.

This year, things are different. Grace has cut her personal ties with Jean Paul Goude and actually got down to songwriting, looking to find the songs that would eclipse the artistic and commercial success of 1981's great *Nightclubbing* set. For the main part she has succeeded, though on first hearing many might find *Living My Life* something of a disappointment. The songs here are starker, relying heavily on rhythm rather than rhyme; the instrumentation kept supple and discreet, designed to fit the lyrical mood of Grace's pen

That mood is one of independence. On the touching *Inspiration* there's *'Stop it now/I've been killing myself/I've been willing myself/to give back all that he gave/another turnstile bare to the bone/turning alone/hope he's turning in his grave. . .'*

Most of the LP is great disco and Grace's voice carries the moods of the various scenarios she chronicles with a definite flair for the dramatic.

The musical backing she receives is first rate: hard and uplifting playing that understands the mechanics of dancing in the dynamic sense. It's ironic perhaps that one of the best songs here, *The Apple Stretching*, is not her own but Melvin Van Peebles'. An observation of New York waking up, it works because of the simplicity of writing — *'the tin cans go clattering down the lane/a drowsy bum thinks it's thunder/and pulls the 'News' over his head/to stop the rain.'*

But perhaps the best lyric lies in *Cry Now Laugh Later: 'Immigration breathing down my back. . . I'm still hurting from the pain/a foreigner in the hell hole, he ain't never going to touch me again.'*

Unfortunately the music here lets it down.

Still, *Living My Life* is a promising blueprint for the future, contains some great modern dance music and is proof that Grace Jones can cut the puppet strings from around her neck and still come up smiling

PAOLO HEWITT

Pushing The Fame Frontier

ADAM ANT
Friend Or Foe
(CBS)

The campaign for global supremacy grinds on. . . a new single, a slightly altered image, a powerful television push and now the first album from Adam since his peripheral accomplices The Ants were politely given the push at the end of last year.

Friend Or Foe is the most confident, fully realised record that Adam and his sturdy sidekick Marco Pirroni have yet produced. It also represents the final sanding down of the splintered, spiky Antmusic that first surfaced so refreshingly during those grey days between *Dirk Wears White Socks* and *Kings Of The Wild Frontier.*

The formula for *Friend Or Foe* remains essentially the same as before, but the music nowadays has been stripped of all its former guts and glory, the intitial abrasive edge now a sacrifice on the altar of family entertainment, leaving nothing but a soft-centred residue. . .bland and deliberate.

The Ants are long gone, replaced here by an impressive supporting cast of sessioneers who coat Adam's farcical fantasies with layer on layer of swashbuckling gloss. Together they plagiarise genre after genre, hopping from vaudeville to glam, thriller theme tunes to spaghetti western soundtracks with Marco even resurrecting the ghost of Johnny Thunders in his garish guitar break on *Something Girls.*

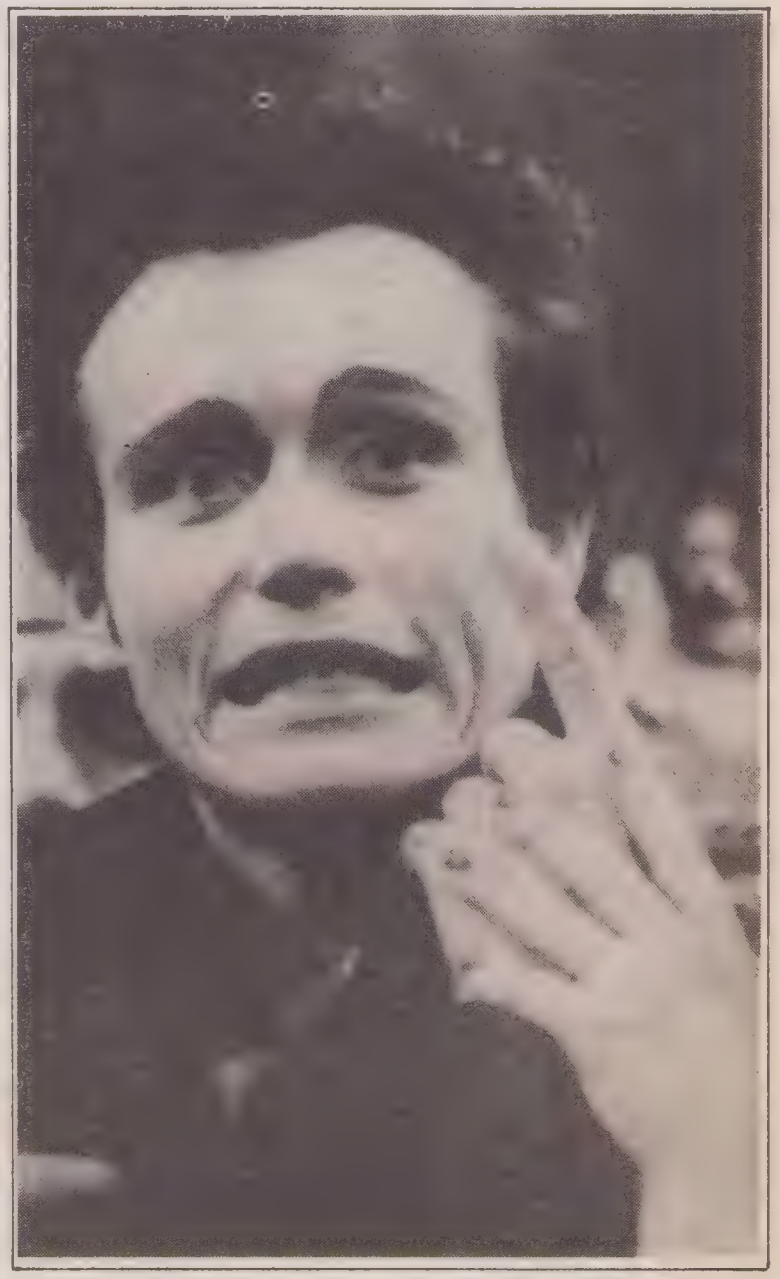
Where last year's *Prince Charming* set was a garbled, directionless affair, *Friend Or Foe* is at least more finely focussed. Adam and Marco know exactly where they are going now and are wasting little time in getting there: they have dropped all pretence of being a rock band or pop group, the emphasis of their act now resting almost entirely on those elements of slapstick flash and superficial dazzle that were previously kept in some check.

Adam the television personality is now much bigger a phenomenon than Adam the musician, as the video stills which decorate the sleeve only reinforce, but never before has the sheer emptiness of his songwriting been quite so apparent — if his career prospects had depended on the quality of his songs, Adam would surely have disappeared ages ago.

If the material is largely in the same musical vein as the two recent singles *Friend Or Foe* and *Goody Two Shoes* — both included here — then the lyrics wallow unashamedly in Adam's obsession with his own fame. They give no real insight, however, into the pain or pleasure of that stardom. Adam is scared to show any sign of weakness or uncertainty, his raving self-obsession manifesting itself in a series of sour, twisted little asides that lurk bitterly between the lines.

Adam's barbed bitterness reeks of an artist trying desperately to resurrect a star that seems to be ever so slightly on the wane. It is amazing, though, that he can manage to get so worked up about it all. After all, ridicule is nothing to be scared of. . .

ADRIAN THRILLS



Adam signals engineer for more hysteria level (Pic: Arnold Williams/LFI)

ROSE TATTOO
Scarred For Life
(Alberts)

Rose Tattoo have never been renowned as an intellectual band; they don't discuss semiotics in their interviews, and they aren't exactly progressive musically. Worst of all, they play rock'n'roll. Very unfashionable and very dumb.

That's the easy course one could take with this album, and this band. People will either love it or hate it, because Rose Tattoo have such a strong imge and sound. If you had never heard of the band before one glance at the back cover would give you a pretty fair indication of the contents along with song titles like *Juice On The Loose*. A bigger bunch of suburban thugs you could never wish to come across. . .

What can't be so easily dismissed is how bands like this sustain their popularity despite receiving no airplay on either mainstream or alternative radio. What *mustn't* be ignored is the fact that Rose Tattoo have never compromised themselves in either their music or their image.

What should be remembered is that they are playing heavy rock with conviction and ferocity that surpasses almost anybody else in the world. Not bad for a bunch of guys who could have just as easily stayed in shit jobs in shit suburbs for

the rest of their lives.

Like it or not, rock is still the music the plebs will continue flocking to, no matter how much you try to "educate" them otherwise (sighs of despair are heard at Clifton Hill).

Bands like The Clash work within their own framework because it takes their politics to people who might not be going to art school this year. Rose Tattoo's vision certainly isn't as ideological as The Clash's, though the songs on *Scarred For Life* touch on topics like nuclear threat, unemployment, war, business exploiting the worker, and even talk of *'starting a revolution to make the streets free'*. Rather inevitably, fighting and fucking also receive liberal mentions; but in the main, Rose Tattoo do manage occasionally to vacillate between their groins *and* their heads.

It's the working class hero bit — so indelibly stamped on the band both literally and metaphorically — that surges through in songs like the title track and *Branded*, and reaches anthemic proportions in the single, *We Can't Be Beaten*. And it's that notion which makes the band so powerfully appealing in the spirit of a song such as *It's Gonna Work Itself Out*.

On the other hand, it culminates in *Revenge*, where racism and defending the working man in Australia are dubiously linked. That song in particular is frightening in the light of its anger and resentment, with Angry Anderson screaming about *'the parasites'*.

And it's Angry Anderson, the band's spokesperson and lyricist, who embodies the heart and soul of Rose Tattoo. A Sentimental Bloke of the Eighties with all the respect, contradictions and confusion that analogy implies, Anderson depicts and *is* the Australian working class man in all his glory and ugliness. As he sings it, *'I've fought my way through the trouble and strife Been knocked around. I've had a hell of a life/I was scarred, scarred for life'*.

If this was Foreigner, I'd laugh my head off. But with Rose Tattoo it really shows, and *that* worries me with a song like *Revenge*. It's all so very close to home.

MARK MORDUE

Joan Jett (Pic: Ian Greene)

Steely Mentholated

DONALD FAGEN
The Nightfly
(WEA)

Ahem. Where were we? Steely Dan go out on the worst album of their entire career. Walter Becker gets involved in one of those stupidly steamy Hollywood jailbait-and-drug scandals that are the infallible identifying mark of the terminal arsehole. Donald Fagan bides his time and eventually comes up with *The Nightfly* an album which doesn't so much dilute the arctic smartassery of the Dan as warm it up, loosen it down and present it in a new context as the chosen style of a naive half-smart young man with fantasies of sophistication.

Fagen prefaces the album with a note to the effect that "the songs on this album represent certain fantasies that might have been entertained by a young man growing up in the remote suburbs of a north-eastern city during the late '50s and early '60s. ie. one of my general height, weight and build. In other words, Fagen can use his patented approach while mocking it and simultaneously revealing its true nature as a device.

The music is, of course, synthesised swing served up in a rather less unconscious than usual mentholated LA style. Even the album's oldie, Dion's *Ruby Baby* gets a disturbingly cool, splintery treatment: a '50s vision of what the swinging nightclub music of the '80s would sound like. People like Larry Carlton, Jeff Porcaro, The Brecker Brothers, Chuck Rainey, Valerie Simpson and the *very great* Marcus Miller (whose bass playing on Miles Davis' *Fat Time* has made him my hero for life) are along for the ride and the end result is like something that Stevie Wonder might have concocted if he were white, Jewish, sighted and in the throes of an acute attack of nostalgia for the Kennedy years.

Fagen spends a lot of *The Nightfly* playing the eagerness and optimism of his younger self for either poignancy or laughs, and he kicks the album off by achieving both on *I.G.Y. (International Geophysical Year)*: *'Standing tough under stars and stripes. We can tell the dream's in sight. You've got to admit it. At this point in time that it's clear the future looks bright . . what a wonderful world this will be, what a wonderful time to be free.'*

His singing is light and carefree, he actually sounds younger than he did on the Dan's albums. However, the two best moments come in the middle of the second side, where — in the title track — Fagen becomes

Fagen as a 1950s DJ

JOAN JETT & THE BLACKHEARTS
(Capitol Theatre, Sydney)

Wow, now that was a real neat night. Yeah, it was the end of year break-up and we got a couple of bands along for this dance.

The first one was pretty good. Like, they got a really good response. They were called UNCANNY X-MEN or something, and they did these really neat impersonations of Richard Clapton, Ross Wilson and Angry Anderson at the end, y'know, takin' the piss with energy and enthusiasm.

Like, I took Julie, the chick with the tits who always sits up the back of the bus. Anyway, she wanted to go outside during the break between the bands, but I figured it was too early 'cos Pat from the sixth form had a couple of joints and that real spotty kid from the fifth had this flask of O.P. rum tucked down his boot so he could get it past the prefects. And we got so pissed'n'out of it we almost missed the beginning of the second band.

That was Joan Jett and the Blackhearts, and they were okay for a bunch of loud-mouthed New York wimps. Like, they were real loud'n'trashy and the chick out front was pretty good to watch. Like, she couldn't sing, but she really got around the stage. And a coupla times she gave me this real hot look, with the whites of her eyes like they were about to pop out of her head. 'Cos we all got right down the front and went for it, y'know. 'Cos up the back, there were all these kids, like twelve and thirteen-year-olds who were there with their parents.

Anyway, this band, they did all these songs like *(I'm Gonna) Run Away* and *Love Is Pain, Victim Of Circumstance, I Love Rock'n'Roll* and *Crimson And Clover* which had unreal lights. But they all sounded the same, y'know. Just real loud and real basic, a huge wall of noise with drums behind and a tough sneer out front. They'd obviously listened to their Gary Glitter and Ramones records.

But towards the end, they started doing these real classics. It was great. A real good jukebox band with songs like *Summertime Blues*, Bowie's *Rebel Rebel*, The Runaways' *Cherry Bomb*, the Stones' *Star-Fucker* and a great version of *Little Drummer Boy*. It was great. They had strobe lights and got nearly everybody clapping and singing along and they did about three or four encores with all these covers, like they'd run out of originals, and when Joan Jett chucked her towel into the crowd, the fight was better than that last scrum in the premiership game.

So it was pretty good. And Julie let me get my fingers wet in the back seat of her old man's car before she dropped me off.

Yeah, it was a pretty hot night. But next year, we're gonna try to get another Aussie band, 'cos you know, these New York groups are okay, but they can't really cut it, y'know.

ANDREW McMILLAN

the sophisticated all-night deejay he used to listen to (*'an independent station/WJAZ/with jazz and conversation'*), and then jets off to the Caribbean for a calypsonic account of political intrigue among the synthesised steel drums that would almost sound like Creole if the musicians didn't seem to be wearing disgusting clothes and not sweating. *The Goodbye Look* is the most Dan-like performance on the album, and Fagen's wit suddenly regrows its fangs. *'Now the Americans are gone except for two/the embassy's been hard to reach/there's been talk and lately a bit of action after dark/behind the big casino on the beach'*, sings Fagen through his teeth as the fake pans chime around him.

The Nightfly is — as I would say — a mandatory purchase for all old farts with a few Steely Dan albums stashed away at the back of the pile, and a fine introduction to Donald Fagen (single personality. . . STAR) for anyone unencumbered with any preconceptions about his past.

Anybody who responds to genuine wit and craftsmanship and who is interested in a non-rocking look at the Kennedy era could do worse than investigate.

Substituting warmth for spite has not dulled Fagen's acuity one iota, and he's still almost too cool. More you could ask for?

CHARLES SHAAR MURRAY

Music For Going Over Balconies By

GERRY RAFFERTY
Sleepwalking
(EMI)

There are really only two ways to listen to Gerry Rafferty music. One is on a moonlit night, a balcony overlooking something esoteric, a fizzy and frightening glass in one hand, a body in lap and much humming and harrgging going on. The other is a few hours later when ▶P26

Rafferty casing trendy balconies

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FRINGE NETWORK BENEFIT
(Ryder's Disco, Fitzroy)

"Look!" exclaimed the guy at the end of the table, interrupting a highly intellectualised debate on the future of 20th century youth-music. I'm in a communal household in Carlton, and it's living up to the cliches. "The Hot Half-Hour Band are headlining the Fringe Network Benefit tonight! We'll have to go!"

What are the Hot Half-Hour Band, then?

"They're a sort of mini-Big Band," he tells me, "with a Big Band sound but all originals. They've got a really snazzy stageshow, with all sort of people. They're great! But what's the Fringe Network?"

The Fringe Network was formed six months ago as a loose association of non-mainstream creative artists and performance groups. The idea is that participating people should have access to each other's skills and facilities, pooling resources, and that F.N. should provide a focus and a voice for the alternative arts in Melbourne.

So far, the response has been enthusiastic. The Fringe Network is now planning to stage a Melbourne Alternative Arts Festival from February 25 to March 11, and I wish them all the very best. The concept is undeniably wonderful; unfortunately, the three bands inflicted on myself and my householding friends at the Benefit were not.

The evening kicked off with TEEN BEAT, who the rest of my group unanimously declared were the worst band they'd ever seen. While they may not be the absolute worst *I've* ever seen, they're certainly in the running — with more than a fighting chance. Imagine a Gong Show caricature of the worst elements of Dave Warner, the Mentals and Ol'55, combined-and-in-rehearsal, and you may have an inkling. The anarchic performance-poetry about maggots fucking was a high point, however, and their many friends in the audience kept the witticisms clumping.

Following Teen Beat was a video I couldn't see, but the soundtrack rivalled a herd of bad-tempered dinosaurs chewing amps. My friends preferred audience-watching to video-viewing, and began a lively discussion on costume as creative expression.

A long time later, COMPETENCE/PERFORMANCE took the stage. The first number was a sparse arrangement of spindly guitar lines, percussive effects and a droning chant vocal; the second song sounded just the same. "Maybe it *is* the same thing, played backwards?" suggested one of our party, while another assured me they sounded "just like Essendon Airport". Whatever, we were easily distracted into an examination of the rise and fall of the alternative press in Australia, and by the time I'd extracted myself they'd finished.

"What were they like?" I hissed to a more attentive friend. "Okay-ish background music," she replied, woodenly.

Finally, we saw some of GO-CIRCUIT. Afflicted by the appalling sound which had been a consistent feature of the entire evening, they didn't sound all that 'alternative'. To me, they sounded like an aspiring mainstream band who simply weren't good enough to get a gig. My Carltonite mates were so disillusioned by this (and by the long, dragging waits between bands) that they couldn't hold out for the HOT HALF-HOUR BAND and decamped prematurely. Worthy as the Fringe Network project is, I figured they had the right idea.

ELLY McDONALD

SINGLES ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE FENCE

Singer, songwriter and MONDO ROCK guitarist ERIC McCUSKER is our Guest Singles Reviewer — and boy, does he think it's a hell of a job!

Very funny thing, trying to think like a critic. I got handed a pile of singles — maybe 15 — and that was only a third of what was there for one or two weeks. *(Not quite, Eric — it's just the way we stack 'em. — Ed.)* There are so many people putting records down and getting them released, and so much of it is shitty. I mean, I didn't bother reviewing the real poo — I might *meet* the people responsible (and maybe I already have).

I've had bad reviews of stuff *I've* done, and it's incredibly aggravating because you get no chance to explain or argue back. This bunch took quite a few hours and I only listened once or twice, and the reviews got worse as I got sick of doing it. Opinions — and reviews are just that — are horribly variable from hour to hour, day to day. And when you try to get down to the reasons for something working or not, then you're dabbling in the metaphysical. Because hits aren't made by expertise or musical excellence or hi-fi technology, but usually by happy accidents as far as I can see. . .

MENTAL AS ANYTHING
Close Again/Homing Pigeon (Regular)
Sort of 'Class A' summer wine , if that's not a contradiction. Bubbly and clear, to be drunk under boardwalks or around pools. This is what I'd choose to wear this summer. The B-side, *Homing Pigeon*, is also a bit veggie, they've a good match. I like the songs and the mood and the record sounds good. Hello Russell, hello Bruce, hello Greedy. . .bring on the album!

NATASHA
Iko Iko/I Should Have Known (Liberation)
Sounds pretty shitty, but captures something appropriate to this old chestnut (or pecan or perhaps macadamia). If I hear this at my next clambake I'll probably leap to my feet and go nuts. The B-side is OK, the sort of production where they tried to capture something old — a droney blues sound — and it works. (I think).

THE BELLE STARRS
The Clapping Song/Blame (Stiff)
For a start it's a lovely thick bit of vinyl. Kind of the same deal as the Natasha record, but much more interesting. Incredible sounds squeezed over huge Afro-drum foreground and assorted concrete jungle-isms gougling in the middle ground. There's a lot of action but it's extremely tight — so there's room for all the women and their producer to do it well. *Good one.*

The B side is crowded, but in the cluttered sense. A bit suss; drum machines sound shitty when the tempos aren't credible.

RUPERT B
Don't Let The Flame Go Out/Steer The Sky (RCA)
This is a fine Australian r'n'b record. *'In the evening when the sun goes down/Don't let the flame go out. . .'*

It's got good horns, strong Matt Moffit-ish lead voice, some exciting counter harmonies and a neat cymbal bell/cow-bell that, along with a couple of other unconventional touches, keep up the interest. (Really slack sleeve, though).

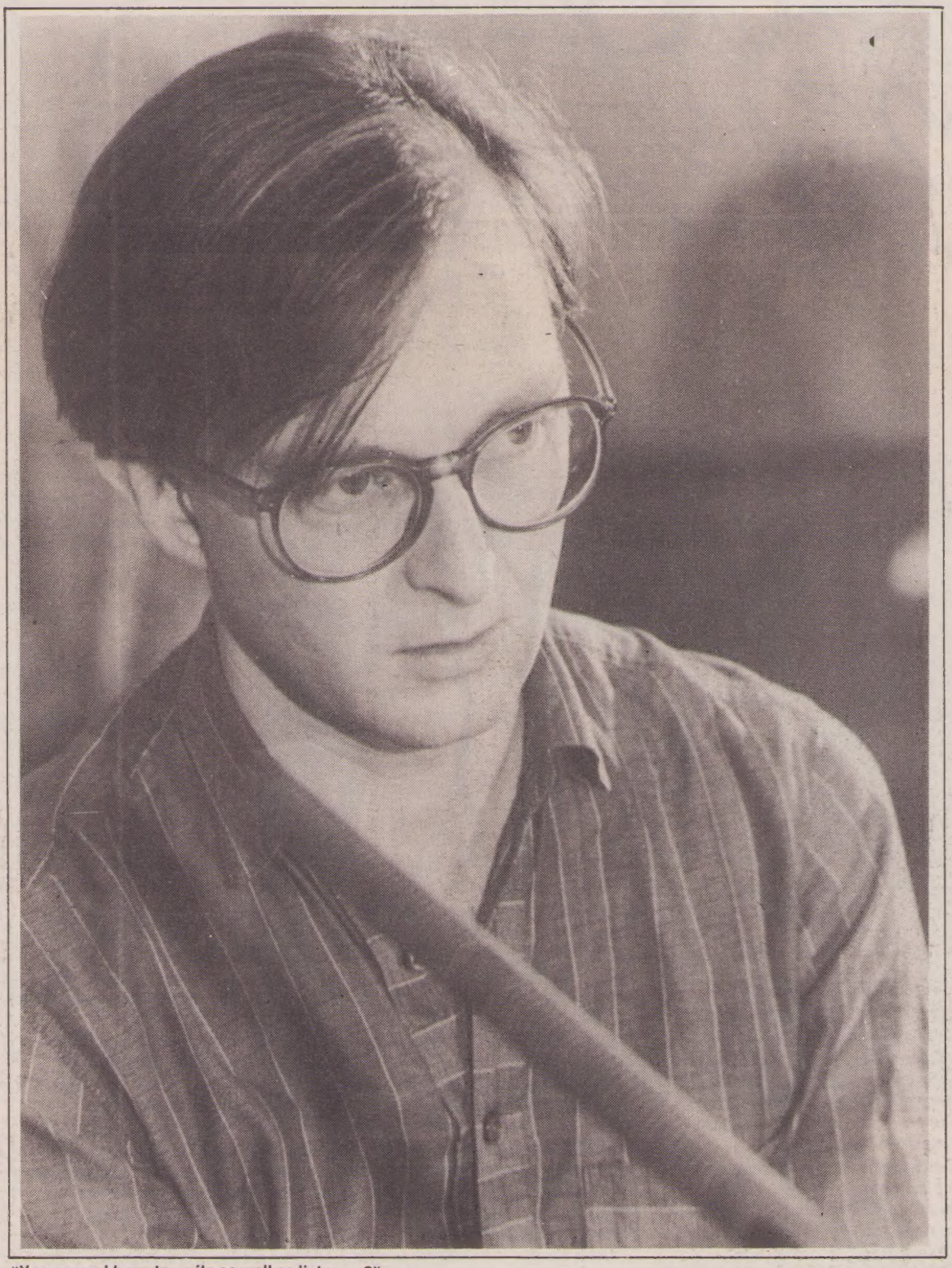
FUN BOY THREE
Summertime/Summer of '82 (Chrysalis)
Lousy pressing of a self indulgent studio extravanganza. They seem to have bitten off more than they can make work. Lots of diverse elements — cellos, trombones, high, jazzy, wordless female lines — but it's all piled together and nothing lines up. A real jerk-off!

The B side, *Summer of '82* (catchy title, isn't it?) is more home turf: a psychotic, round-and-round portrait of a nervous London summer, everything on the verge. With this one all the crazy bits contribute rather than detract. I quite like it.

FAD GADGET
Life On The Line/Four M (Abstract)
A record about the fear of signing away one's life to the company store. The only sleeve credits are for typography and photography, so I assume the band have retained control of everything else. . .The typography and photography are great, the record inside is thick and dull.

MARBLE SOLDIERS
Face A New Day/Exploding World (Hitmaker Records)
A single like this costs the same as any other single. . .It's from a new band: very roughly recorded in an eight-track studio and it doesn't sound very good, but there is *some* stuff happening. A bit of *go*, a bit of future, maybe. But for the same price you can get records that are better, and that's the truth (good old market forces!)

SACRED COWBOYS
Nothing Grows In Texas/Is Nothing Sacred? (White Label)
Great name. Great expectations based on past individual achievement. . .Ah, well!



"You mean I have to *write* as well as listen. . .?"

ANDY SUMMERS & ROBERT FRIPP
I Advance Masked/Hardy Country (A & M)
By this time of day I'm really looking for a spark. It started well, but I haven't liked everything for about an hour. . .Maybe Andy and Robert?

Nope. Two sides of formless meandering in 7/4; on the B side the bass is out of tune. I mean, Jesus, perhaps they're starting to believe their bios — but I couldn't enjoy this, even as a curious technician.

DON MILLER ROBINSON
There Was A Girl/Ghosts Of Love (WEA)
This has a reasonable selection of the appropriate pop elements, but tended to leave little impression. The B side is much better: a strong mood *and* some memorable melodic bits from Sydney bloke Don (who's in *Monkey Grip*. . .)

DEXYS MIDNIGHT RUNNERS
Jackie Wilson Said/Let's Make This Precious (Mercury)
I was sort of saving this one for the end because I really like the Van Morrison version, and enjoyed Dexys' last number. They've taken the arrangement practically note for note, just changing the instrumentation (replacing saxes with strings), and changed the word 'coffee' to 'tea' (the significance of which eluded me). But Van's version really strutted and swung, while this one sounds a bit mousey and cluttered.

This was a smallish hit in England, so maybe I'm being distracted by preconceptions; but I don't think it's as good as *Eileen*. I slightly prefer the B side: *'Give me a record that cries pure and true/No, not those guitars, they're too noisy and cruel. . .'*

He's definitely got Van's taste for the street choir, this Kevin Rowland, and I like him. But his version of *Jackie Wilson* has a pronounced limp. L-I-M-P, pronounced 'limp'. . .

CULTURE CLUB
Do You Really Want To Hurt Me? (Virgin)
This is the gem of the batch. Good song, wild voice — all shake and cutting edge — and there are those nice little production touches. Some of the devices are really odd: little one-note string lines, electric sitar doubling vibes on a melody line, but the groove moves through. . .Yeah, it's great

explaining and playing down sexual inadequacies while counting up the points.

It's that type of music. The tunes, overlaid with his marvellously melodic voice, suggest breezy days sucking on something long. Then at the necessary times it perks up the slumbering soul with some up-tempo thump. It's no-hair-out-of-place stuff, where the tasty blend of folk and rock subtletly flows on like bottles of rare white. Well, more like non-alcoholic white. There are no warping after-effects.

Rafferty's latest offering is a nice example of his consistent healing skills. Like his earlier solo efforts after the demise of Stealer's Wheel (*City To City* and *Night Owl*), *Sleepwalking* is another perfect pop/rock record, but with a *bit* of substance.

Heavy in orchestration with foreshortened lyrics, *Sleepwalking* turns breeziness into an art. He even makes the plastic-age synthesiser, which I abhor, sound tantalising. What a great jingling effect in the last song *As Wise As A Serpent!* That little flutish tingle buzzes around long enough in your body to drive *everyone* crazy when you whistle it all day.

If you are after messages to chant at the next cricket and/or soccer riot, forget it. But if you aspire to be a relaxed cat reaching for the middle class, get *Sleepwalking*. Make certain, though, that you put some sort of barrier or fence on your balcony to stop you going over the edge while you try some of those groovy middle class dances you learnt at the office Xmas party. Remember, your mortgage-ridden neighbours may not appreciate cleaning up the mess in this time of fest.

GREG GROWDEN

GEORGE THOROGOOD AND THE DESTROYERS
Bad To The Bone (EMI)

George Thorogood is an unashamed rip-off merchant. (Have I got your attention? Well, now for the cop-out conciliatory line. . .) But then so is virtually everyone else ploughing around in the hyped up blues and r'n'b furrow. One big difference that pulls Thorogood away is that he shows compassion for his art. He has always been one to credit the original writer of the stirring ditty he's just modified — (not like some mega-heroes, hint hint Led Zeppelin) — while showing respect for the skills of the true fathers of rock'n'roll such as Elmore James, Robert Johnson, Howling Wolf, John Lee Hooker, and Muddy Waters.

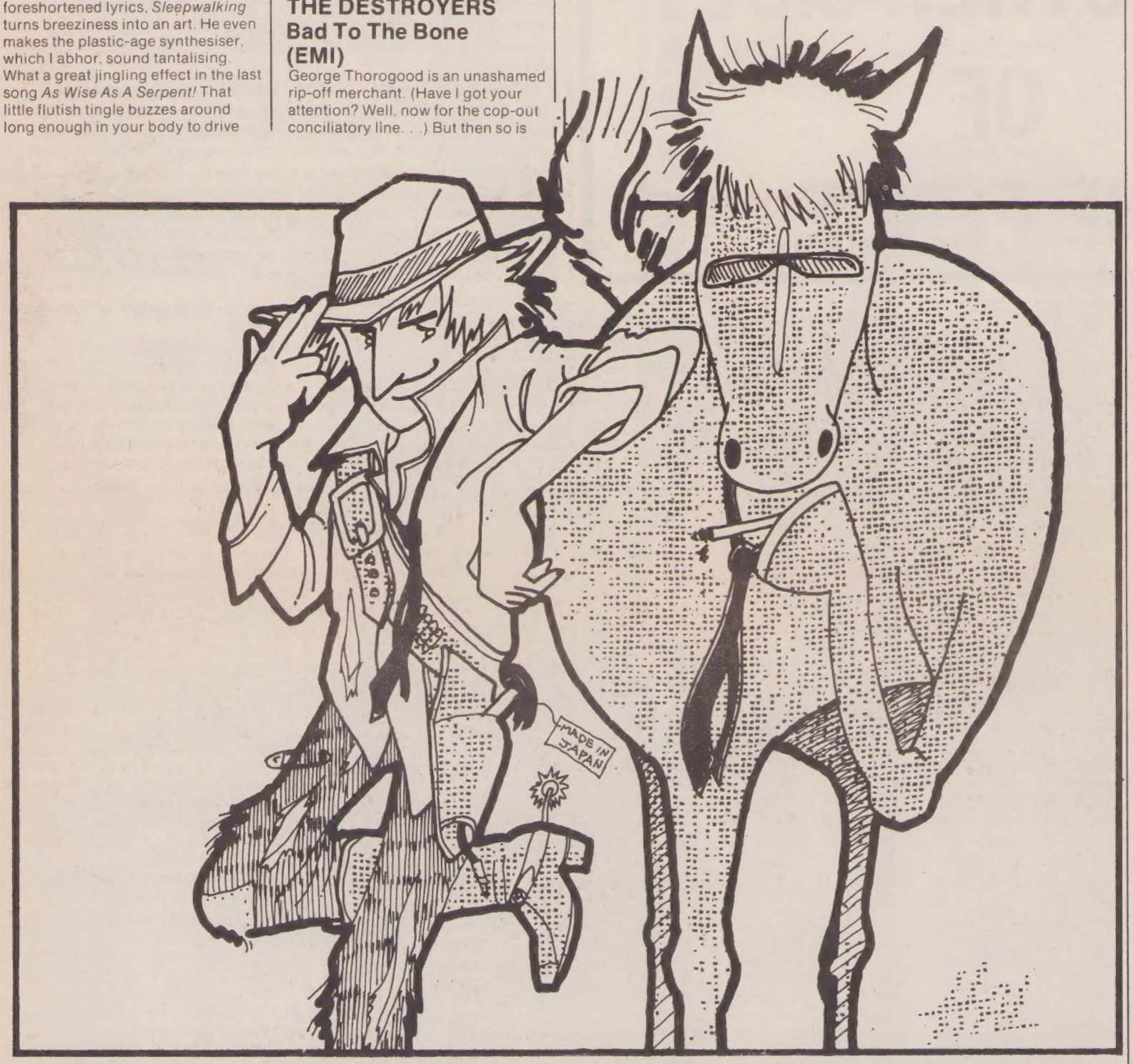
With a measure of esteem, he carries on the great white tradition of stealing from the blacks on his new record. Unfortunately though, it doesn't work as well as some of his other offerings. This time he has mixed those old riffs to make some new songs that sound OK but are far too contrived.

The title track and single, *Bad To The Bone*, is an amalgam of Muddy Waters' *Mannish Boy* and *Hoochie Coochie Man*. It works relatively well, but the thought of being blatantly conned hinders full enjoyment.

In an album that abounds in energy, there are some fine songs including *Blue Highway*, *Miss LuAnn*, and a rich version of Dylan's *Wanted Man*. But there are too many half-duds to go totally bonkers over.

Thorogood has also slickened up a bit. The music establishment has come home to roost. Ian Stewart, the ageless, faceless Rolling Stones keyboardist, appears; the back photograph is done by Annie Liebovitz, and the record is *not* being secreted away at the back of the blues sections in record shops. But for someone wanting to delve into Thorogood, I would recommend searching those cobwebbed corners his early outstanding, gut-wailing records instead of *Bad To The Bone*.

GREG GROWDEN



SACRED COWBOYS/THE JOHNNIES
(Sydney Trade Union Club)

Dear Ma,

How's Ringwood Gulch? Sydney's great. I just finished mah grits, so I thought I'd write y'all a letter before I bunk down for the night. I've seen the Opera House and the Harbour Bridge and they sure are mighty purty. The other night I moseyed on down to a club three levels high full of weird city slickers. They had some big bash on for people who sort of looked like the punks we saw on *Solid Gold* last year. (Hey, I done seen Rolf Harris in the street yesterday!) Hoooweee, they were a strange bunch alrighty, and I'd drunk a few sarsaparillas afore I found out there was an upstairs for the bands.

To tell the truth Ma, I was drinkin' whisky, and I guess you could say I drank to excess. But a man's gotta have his relaxation. But then these city dudes all dressed up in their dungarees as cowpokes, agoin' by the name of The Johnnies, started to play. They's supposed to be what came of three fellas who left Le Hoodoo Gurus and The Allniters, and at times they put out a real mean sound. I say, *reeeeeel* mean. Kinda like The Cramps meets a raunchy John Wayne (God rest your soul, Duke), with meaty T-bone steak geetars slashin' and growlin' like coyotes on heat.

Now don't think I'm not a fair man, 'cos I am. More than fair. But after a while the whole shebang was a mite loud and sloppy. And the jokes. Sheeeeeit! They was awful. I wouldn't go along with the heckler who told them to "fuck off back to Memphis", but I guess the novelty of their getup weren't enough to carry a rough show. And they sure ain't got the wit yet to do it either. I'd say they'll be in the pub corral for a while till the colts settle down, it apparently bein' only their second ever performance.

Don't let me put you off the boys, Ma, 'cos they were real hard triers and the crowd mostly seemed to love them. Maybe I'm gettin' hard from too long on the trail. Just me and mah horse Betsy. A man gets lonely out there. . .

Huh, I'd best cut the gabbing and git back to the story. The next varmints were Sacred Cowboys, but there weren't nuthin' cowboyish about their looks 'ceptin' their swaggering. They're supposed to be a pretty tough outfit from Melbourne. Have you heard of the Hole-In-The-Wall Gang? Well from the write-ups these rough-riders have been gettin', you'd think *they* put the hole in the wall in the wall. Heee hee hee. . .

As you well know, Ma, I'm a Wayne Newton fan meself, and Kenny Rogers can sometimes bring a tear to mah eye. But these Sacred Cowboys were one of them cavemen rock'n'roll bands (leastways everybody said they was 'pri-mal'), with bits sounding like the records that modern dude up the road used to play, like The Doors, The Birthday Party and American Detroit type stuff. . . sorta. With two bassists, there weren't so much a beat as a rhythm rumble, and the drummin' was real mighty. Overall though, this gang from the south swung their mud-rock boogie around like a club made of sludge. It threatened but it rarely made contact.

Their singer was about as interestin' as a cow chewing cud — he looked bored and/or awkward bar a few moments of intensity. Worst of all he was a bit of a ham, scowling and prowling around like he was.

You know, what was wrong with Sacred Cowboys was kinda tied up with their version of The Modern Lovers' *Pablo Picasso*. They did a "brutal", "savage" rendition sho' nuff — wilder than a rodeo. But their interpretation was all sweaty machismo instead of what they call say-tirical. I wanted Woody Allen and they gave me Clint Eastwood and *Magnum Force*.

Sacred Cowboys brought some truth to *Nothing Grows In Texas* — not enough yet to warrant all the attention and even Mister Meldrum's stamp of disapproval. The critters have potential, an' I ain't denyin' it, but at the moment it's not blossoming as much as people would have you believe. You boys come back real soon now, you hear? Night Ma.

Your loving son,

MARK 'Tex' MORDUE

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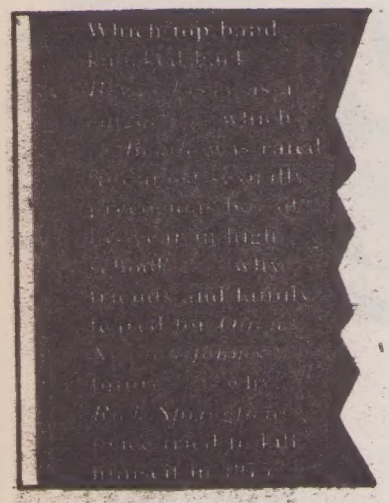

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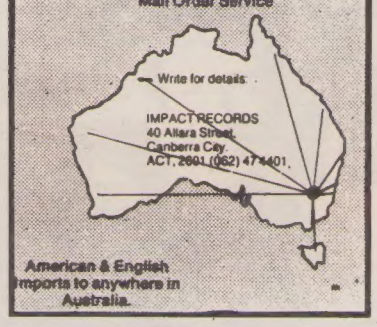

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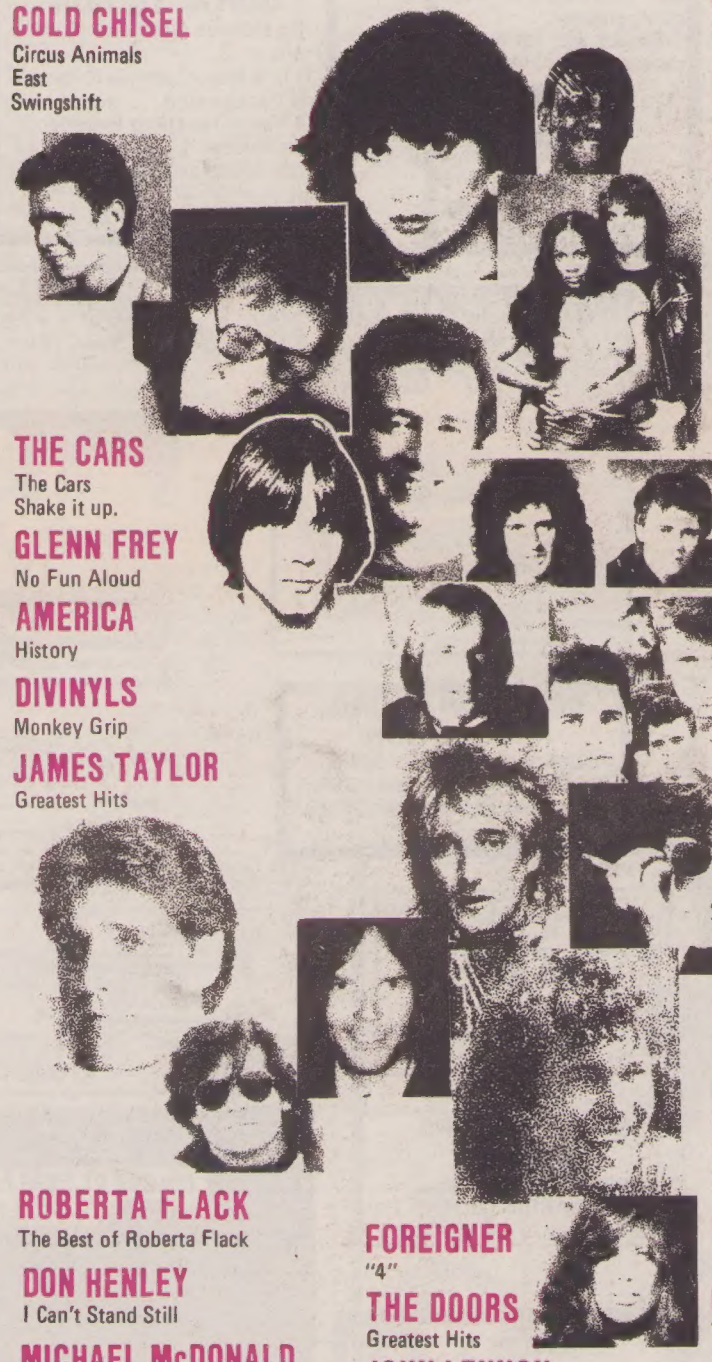

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